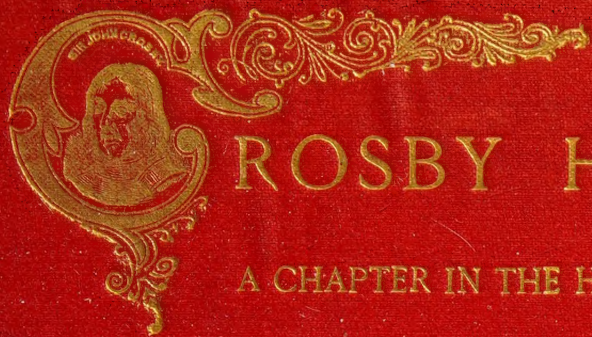




ROSBY HALL

A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF LONDON



CHARLES W. F. GOSS

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CROSBY HALL

a chapter in the history of London



View of Crosby Place from the Priory Close of St. Helen's as it is supposed to have existed *circa* 1471.
Returning from the chase under St. Helen's Campanile from Bishopsgate Street.

(From an engraving by W. S. Wilkinson, after H. J. Hammon)

CROSBY HALL

A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF LONDON

BY

CHARLES W. F. GOSS

Author of

“A DESCRIPTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE JACOB
HOLYOAKE”

WITH 36 ILLUSTRATIONS

SECOND AND REVISED EDITION

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TO THE
GOVERNORS OF THE BISHOPSGATE FOUNDATION
THIS BRIEF ACCOUNT OF
CROSBY HALL
IS, WITH PERMISSION, GRATEFULLY
INSCRIBED AND DEDICATED
BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT
CHAS. WM. F. GOSS.

August, 1908.

PREFACE

The first edition of this work was undertaken at the flattering request of two friends—Mr. ALFRED J. SINDALL and Mr. JAS. S. CROWTHER—who urged that nothing had yet appeared which could be deemed a *history* of Crosby Place; that its story was a vital part of the greater theme of London's past glories; that the material I had collected on Bishopsgate would furnish my starting point, and that the time was opportune. In a weak moment of compliance, I undertook the task, in the confident hope that the publication of this little book would synchronize with yet another lease of life for the venerable fabric, and that it might have some share in effecting so desirable a consummation. As detailed in the last chapter of the book, these hopes have been frustrated, and my essay can now only be a requiem on the passing away of a building, which was considered the richest example of Gothic domestic architecture in London, and Bishopsgate's chief witness of the stirring times of yore.

It will be obvious to the reader that the book was written while the fate of Crosby Hall was still in suspense, and when it was hoped that the pick of the housebreaker would never ring upon its time-honoured walls. In this edition I have rewritten the last chapter to make the history complete by narrating the final denouement, and take

this opportunity of adding a word of gratitude to Sir T. VEZEY STRONG, Mr. W. R. E. COLES, and other members of the Preservation Committee, for their persistent and disinterested efforts to avert the calamity. The Press, and particularly *The City Press*, were also honourably distinguished in this unavailing "rescue-work."

The changes which are annually taking place in the topography of London, are viewed with regret by antiquaries and lovers of London's history, and with pity by Continental authorities, as one landmark after another falls a sacrifice to the mercenary builder, by the rising tide of so-called improvement. Without the slightest warning, the building passed into the hands of the Directors of the Chartered Bank of India for demolition, to make way for their new premises, and the feeling which was immediately excited in every quarter of England in favour of its preservation and restoration, may serve as my apology for submitting a history of the ancient palace; with an accurate record of the several alterations and vicissitudes it had met with during a period of more than 400 years, as well as an account of the varied attractions and associations which thickly cluster around the history of Crosby's palace.

In the preparation of the work I have placed many books under contribution, and to the Governors of the Bishopsgate Foundation I owe a debt of gratitude, for the use I have been privileged to make of the magnificent collection of London literature to be found at their Institute, including several middle 16th century title deeds of Crosby Hall, recently purchased by them, the contents of which are now published for the first time. To Mr. R. V. SOMERS-SMITH, Clerk to the Worshipful Company of Grocers, my thanks are due for permission to make extracts from the "Warden's

Book of 1518-1519," and to photograph the marble bust and the bronze statue of Sir John Crosby, so carefully preserved in Grocers' Hall. It may not be thought improper, remembering the typographical difficulties of reproducing the early English of the documents distributed through the book, to admit my obligations to the printers and publishers (Messrs. CROWTHER & GOODMAN) for the remarkable accuracy and general finish of their work.

My friend, Mr. STANFORD HALE, Librarian at Forest Hill, has taken much more than ordinary interest in this little volume, and I would gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to him for assistance as generously given as his suggestions have proved valuable.

C. W. F. G.

ROZEL,
MANOR ROAD,
FOREST HILL.
August, 1908.

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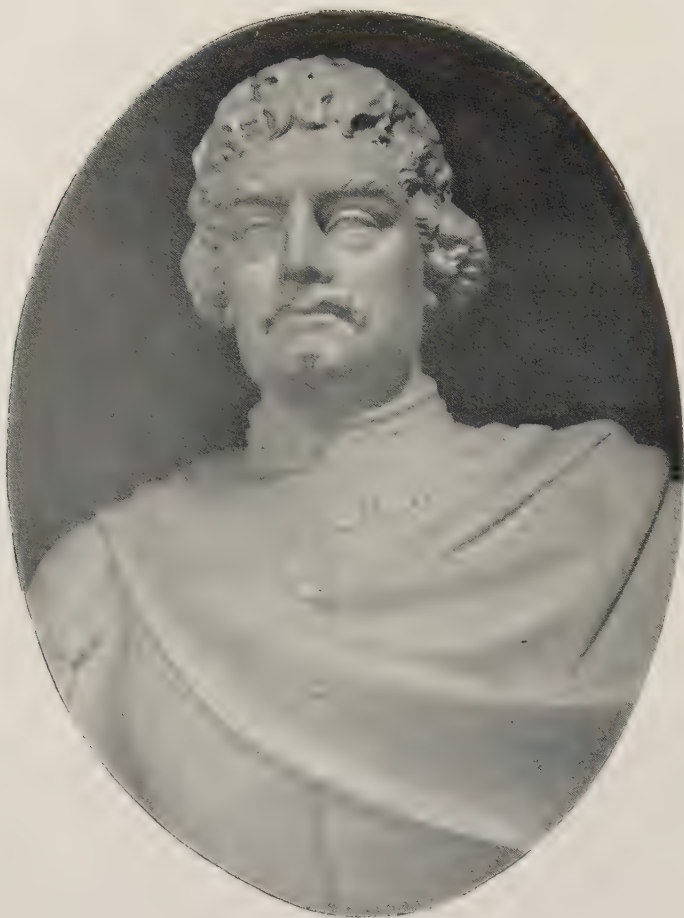
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SIR JOHN CROSBIE, Knight,
Founder of Crosbie House.

(From a marble bust preserved at Grocers' Hall)

CROSBY HALL

a chapter in the history of London

CHAPTER I

SIR JOHN CROSBY: HIS ANCESTRY AND CAREER

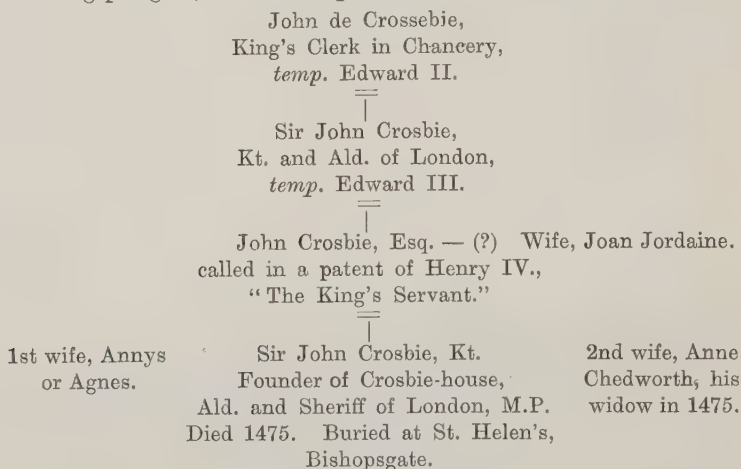
IN Bishopsgate Street, in the heart of the City of London, there stood the remains of an ancient Gothic building, which, though twisted, defaced, and degraded by time, was spared to us until February of this year (1908). It had been by turns, to quote but a few of its vicissitudes, a City merchant's mansion, a Royal palace, the residence of a Chancellor, a Lord Mayor's mansion, a Presbyterian meeting house, a packer's warehouse, a semi-prison, a Literary and Scientific Institute, and finally a restaurant. The history of this house runs, like some thicker thread, through the warp of the history of London city, often disappearing, often broken, yet still traceable.

From deeds, tombs, wills, old prints, records—whatever sources are available—I propose to reconstruct the story of this house, which, whatever else it lost in the chances of things, never lost its name of Crosby Hall. And since its earliest mentions occur in connection with its founder, it will be convenient to begin with some account of the life of Sir John Crosby.

Amongst the outstanding London merchant princes of the fifteenth century, whose great wealth and extensive dealings so largely contributed to lay the foundations of the great international commerce of present times, was one John Crosby, who, like Dick Whittington and many others, has commonly been represented as a needy boy, one who, by diligence in business raised himself to

an opulent and commanding position in the City. Stow, writing little more than a hundred years after Crosby's death, shows that the myth-making tendency was already at work, by his quotation of the current tradition, that Crosby was an illegitimate child and a foundling, deriving his name from the circumstance of his being discovered near one of those public crosses, formerly so common in our highways, and hence named Cross-by, Crossbie, or Crosby; and in 1600, the old dramatist, Heywood, introduces him into his play "Edward IV." and makes him say that he was found near a cross, and that he was subsequently brought up in the Hospital of London, but Stow observes upon this point: "I hold it a fable said of him to be named Crossbie, of being found by a crosse."

Whether such was the origin of the family name is, as Sir Thomas Browne would say, "not beyond all conjecture," but the "penniless 'prentice" myth is effectually dissipated by the following pedigree, for each step of which authority is furnished:—



My authority for the existence of the 1st John de Crossebie is the "Calendar of the Close Rolls, Edward II., A.D. 1313-18," from which the following is an extract:—

"Memorandum, that the King at Westminster on 17 June [1316] granted, at the instance of the Earl of Pembroke, to John de Crosseby, Clerk of the Chancery, the first void church of the King's gift under the taxation of £20, and hereupon ordered Sir John de Sandale, the Chancellor, to present the said Clerk to such church "when a voidance occurs."

Referring to the 2nd John Crosbie, Styrpe, the ecclesiastical historian and continuator of Stow, says:—

“ In the reign of King Edward III., was another John Crosby, a Knight and Alderman of London, and had a son and heir called “John. Of this Sir John I find this record [preserved in the Tower of “London]—‘Edwardus Princeps Wallie, Dux Cornubie Concessit, etc. “Edward, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, hath granted to “Thomas Rigby, etc., the custody of the manor and advowson of “Hanworth, which lately was Sir John Crosby’s, which he held of “the same Prince Edward the day wherein he died; to have and to “hold until the lawful age of his son and heir, called John Crosby.’ ”

This grant was confirmed by the King about the year 1376. We thus arrive at the 3rd John Crosby, whom we find at the Court of Henry IV. as Gentleman of the Chamber to his Majesty. All we know of his subsequent career is that he was dismissed from Court because he had become objectionable to the Commons, and that in the year 1405, King Henry—still apparently favourable—granted him the guardianship of Joan, daughter and sole heiress to John Jordaine, a wealthy fishmonger. He afterwards married his ward, Joan Jordaine, and by her had a son, the man we have been working towards, John Crosby, the founder of Crosby Hall. Now, the connection of John Crosby with this strain is proved by his will, which shows that he had inherited “the manor and advowson of Hanworth, in Middlesex.”

Mr. Richard Gough, certainly one of the most accurate and judicious of our antiquarian writers, has, I venture to think, fallen into error with reference to the founder of Crosby Place. In his “Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain,” Mr. Gough says:—“The first mention that occurs of John Crosbie in our records is in the will of Lord Scrope, of Masham, who left Crosby a woollen gown without furs, and one hundred shillings.” Now, Lord Scrope was beheaded at Southampton in 1415, for being concerned in the plot against Henry V., at which time the builder of Crosby Place could not have been more than 5 years of age. It is more than improbable that such a bequest would be made to a minor, therefore it may reasonably be assumed that the “gown and one hundred shillings” constitute only a further mention of the earlier John Crosbie, the husband of Joan Jordaine.

John Crosby was born about the year 1410, but the earliest reference to him, so far as I have been able to trace, is that which

appears in the account of the Wardens of the Grocers' Company for 1452-4, as having paid the fee of 3s. 4d. on being sworn a freeman of the Company. (*Grocers' Company's Facsimile Records, II., p. 330.*)

In Crosby's time the citizen did not seek so much for knighthood as that honour is sought to-day; rather did he aim at becoming warden and master of his guild, or alderman and mayor of his city or town. This was the case with John Crosby, and it shows the estimation in which his character was held by his Company that he should be selected to hold, on several occasions, the office of Warden of the Grocers' Company, but I am only able to trace the date of his holding this office in the year 1463-4. He was about the same time also a distinguished member of the Woolmen's Company.

The monument of mediæval splendour which had, for rather more than four centuries, perpetuated the name of John Crosby, and which had been one of the glories of the City of London, is proof, if proof were needed, that in his day a London merchant played many other parts than that of a tradesman. These were days when the citizen was a soldier, and the merchant a diplomatist. He had inherited a handsome fortune, but vast apparently as was his wealth he engaged in trade as a silk mercer in Cony Hope Lane, near the Grocers' Hall, and by his exertions considerably augmented his patrimony. The extent of his dealings is proved by his intimacy and connection with Frescobaldi, Bardi, and the famous Medici, the princely merchants and financiers of Florence, to whom King Edward repeatedly had recourse for pecuniary assistance. Who more likely than John Crosby to negotiate these loans?

At what period John Crosby first acquired and resided upon the Priory lands we have no certain record, but I am perfectly satisfied that he held the lease of, and resided in, a great mansion here long before 1466, the year quoted by all writers upon this subject as that of his first connection with what was afterwards known as Crosby Place.

Dame Alice Wodehous, Prioress of St. Helen's, had, some time earlier than 1466, granted him the lease of that "great tenement," which probably included a mansion of far greater proportions than

that with which we have been accustomed to associate the name of Sir John Crosby. In the lease granted to Crosby in the year 1466, by Dame Alice Ashfeld, we find that it included—

“ All that tenement with houses, upper chambers, cellars, and gardens adjacent, *once* in the tenure of Cataneo Pinello, a merchant of Genoa, and *now* in the tenure of the said John, which, and all of which, the said John lately had of the lease of Alice Wodehous, late Prioress.”

We also find later on in the lease that the said John was

“ To HAVE and to hold all the said tenement, with the houses, cellars, upper chambers, gardens adjacent, belonging to the same tenement and its other appurtenances as fully and entirely as the said John Crosby *held and had them before the date of these present letters.*”

We may therefore justly state that John Crosby had lived on the Priory lands for many years before 1466, and it is very probable, too, that his father lived here before him, for in the year 1411 we read of a certain John Crosby paying a tax sanctioned by Parliament to meet the pecuniary needs of Henry IV. The abstract of the subsidy Roll reads :—

“ From John Crosseby, having lands and rents in the same city [of London] worth by the year £31 12s. 0d. over and above the reprises.—Subsidy 6s. 8d.”

It is interesting to note in the same Roll that Dick Whittington became liable for a similar impost on an amount of £25 over and above that at which he had already been assessed, while similarly the Prioress of St. Helen's was extra-assessed at £120 0s. 7d., upon which she had to pay 6s. 8d. in every £20.

In a document for April, 1466, preserved at Guildhall, it is recorded that John Crosby was elected a Member of Parliament for the City of London, and a little later he was selected to fill the office of Auditor of the City and Bridge House Estates. Shortly afterwards his wife died, just at the time he was contemplating a fresh lease of the estate.

Although, as we have seen, he was already the occupant of a mighty mansion at the time he was returned as Member for the City, it is but natural that a wealthy man, as we know him to have been, should desire the possession of a mansion worthy the recipient of these fresh dignities. Be this as it may, we find him treating with Dame Alice Ashfeld, Prioress of the Convent of St. Helen's,

for a lease of a lane, now known as Great St. Helen's, formerly Crosby Street, extending from the back of his property to the corner of the lane leading into the Priory Close of St. Helen's; together with nine messuages, six of which appear to have blocked up the Bishopsgate front of his mansion, and three standing along the Priory Close front of the estate, north and east of the Banqueting Hall.

Sir John Crosby's name is principally remembered, not so much for his deeds either in a civil or official capacity, but as the builder of that magnificent erection known by the designation of Crosby Hall; but whether he caused to be cleared away the "nine messuages" he had just then leased, and had erected in their stead the Great Hall and Council Chamber, is a question I am quite unable to answer; but if he did build the Hall and Council Chamber—which some writers deny—these were but additions to the considerable mansion then existing south and east of the Hall on what is now Crosby Square, and covering an area six times that occupied by the Hall and Council Chamber put together.

Although a very peaceful man, he was, nevertheless, an active partisan, and perhaps the most prominent of our civic functionaries in the struggles between the Houses of Lancaster and York, and it may be assumed that while his Palace was in course of erection under the superintendence of his tasteful architect, he, as a soldier, was at times to be found wearing the white rose of the Yorkist, defending his Royal master, Edward IV.

On December 8th, 1468, John Crosby was elected Alderman of Broad Street, in place of Sir Thomas Cooke, who was discharged by Edward IV., and in 1470, the year in which it is said "Crosbie's Palace" was completed, he was serving the honourable office of Sheriff, during the mayoralty of Sir John Stockton, and Henry VI.'s temporary restoration. At this time Sir John Crosby, although connected with all the principal events, both in a civil and official capacity, was appointed to the post of Mayor of the Staple of Calais—then in the possession of England—a position of considerable importance in its day. The Merchant Staplers had the monopoly of exporting the principal raw commodities of England, especially wool, to all the lands we then held in France. He represented also the commercial interests of the German Hanse Merchants in



THE BANQUETING HALL
looking South, showing the Oriel Window.

(From an engraving by Wise, after Nash)

England. The Mayor had an official residence in Calais where he exercised jurisdiction in all commercial cases. He had civil authority over Calais, could arrest offenders for trespass or breach of contract, adjudicated in case of debt, and wielded generally wide administrative powers.

The earliest reference to Crosby Hall which I have seen is that given by Stow. Speaking of Sir John Crosby and Crosby's Place he says: "This house he builded of stone and timber, very large and beautiful, and the highest at that time in London." The authority for Stow's statement that Crosby Place was erected by Sir John has been questioned on the ground that, in the original lease granted by the Prioress of St. Helen's to that eminent citizen there is mention that the site, or part of it, was already occupied by a "great tenement," formerly in the possession of Cataneo Pinello, a Genoese merchant.

In default of further evidence we must choose between the belief that Crosby built round the core of Pinello's mansion, and the belief that he cleared it away entirely. The adoption of the former belief would, by many years, increase the antiquity of at least part of the building. Some deny that the existing Hall is of Crosby's building, but that contention is answered as if by Crosby in person, for his crest occurs on a boss in the ceiling of the arched oriel or bay window of the Hall itself. It is more to our purpose to note the singular resemblance between the windows of Crosby Mansion and those of the Great Hall at Eltham Palace, which was built in the reign of Edward IV., as was Crosby Hall. Moreover, the Great Hall at Eltham is decorated with Edward IV.'s badge or device composed of roses and suns alternately disposed, while the effigy of Sir John in St. Helen's Church is represented as wearing the same distinction of his Royal master round his neck, and indeed the general features of the two buildings lead experts to think that both are the work of the same architect. It would be most gratifying to be able to record the name of the architect to whom so important a work was confided, but, unfortunately, nothing is known respecting the architect or architects of either place.

Our next meeting with Sir John Crosby is in his military capacity, employed in defending his own quarter of the City. It was but a few months after the completion of Crosby Hall that Thomas

Nevil, better known as "The Bastard Falconbridge," knowing King Edward was then engaged in pursuing Queen Margaret, marched upon London with 17,000 men, to enrich himself by the plunder of the City, but ostensibly with the object of liberating Henry VI. from the Tower of London. Falconbridge shortly became master of Southwark, and, assembling his troops in St. George's Fields, demanded admission into the City; but being repulsed at Bankside, he stormed London Bridge, setting fire to the houses upon it, and others to the number of 300 in its neighbourhood. In the meantime he had ordered some 3,000 men to cross the river at St. Katherine's, with instructions to assault Aldgate and Bishopsgate; but the citizens, under the command of John Crosby, and Aldermen Robert Bassett and Ralph Jocelyn, were amply sufficient to repulse the rebels on all sides. Thereupon, Falconbridge, with the remnant of his army, with difficulty, returned to Sandwich. This incident occurred on the 12th May, 1471.

That in so short a lapse of time as 125 years from his death Crosby became a favourite, if somewhat legendary, hero of the people, is shown by his introduction in this very military incident into Heywood's play of "Edward IV.," written in 1600, and frequently played in the Shoreditch and Bankside Theatres.

Crosby appears exhorting his citizen-army thus:—

"Stick to your city as good men should do;
Think, that in Richard's time e'en such a rebel
Was then by Walworth, the Lord Mayor of London,
Stabbed dead in Smithfield.
Then show yourselves as it befits the time,—
Dare stab a rebel were he made of brass."

He is further made to say to his men:—

"Ye have bestirred yourselves like good citizens, and shown
"yourselves true subjects to the King!—'Prentices, you worthily
"bestirred yourselves, that it did cheer my heart to see your valour!"

Again, Crosby is represented with his men drawn up in front of the gates of London Bridge, parleying with Falconbridge, who, from the other side, imperiously demands admission into the City, and the liberation of Henry VI. from the Tower. In reply to Crosby's refusal, Falconbridge calls for the name of the speaker. "Shore!" was the answer. "What!" replied Falconbridge, "not that Shore that hath the dainty wife?"



SIR JOHN CROSBY.

(From a bronze statue preserved at Grocers' Hall, by kind permission)

Heywood represents Sir John Crosby as Lord Mayor, and in the second scene of Act IV. he is introduced clad in his robes standing in his own empty great Hall after the company had departed soliloquising thus—

“ Ay, marry, Crosby, this befits thee well,
But some will marvel, that with scarlet gown,
I wear a gilded rapier by my side ;
Why, let them know ; I was knighted in the field,
For my good service to my Lord the King.”

At the same time Jane Shore, the wife of Matthew Shore goldsmith, is represented as officiating as the Lady Mayoress, and this was the occasion upon which, it is supposed, King Edward first became acquainted with her. The play is very interesting, but, as a matter of fact, Sir John was not Mayor, and never reached the Civic chair. Sir John Stockton was Lord Mayor in that year.

But, happily, the “ I was knighted ” is fact, for upon the return of Edward IV. to London from Yorkshire on the 21st May, Sheriff Crosby, accompanied by the Aldermen, Recorder, and a vast multitude of citizens, went to meet him in the fields somewhere between Hornsey and Shoreditch, and it is recorded that on the highway Crosby, Urswick (Recorder), Basset, and Jocelyn (Aldermen), and eight others received the distinction of knighthood from the King. Fabian, in his “ Chronicles,” states that the mayor feigned sickness, and that he was represented by a deputy. The honour would appear to have been conferred upon Sir John and the others as a reward for their fidelity to his cause and gallantry in resisting the Lancastrian Falconbridge’s attempt to force an entrance into the City. It is also said that several of the citizens had assisted the King with money, and it may be concluded that the wealthy new knight had given somewhat handsomely.

In the year 1472 there were many negotiations of truces and alliances with foreign princes tending to secure the tranquility of the King and kingdom. Although Sir John took an active interest in civic affairs, he also appears to have acquired great political importance during those perilous times, and the estimation in which he was held as a zealous adherent to King Edward’s cause, and his consequence as an influential person, may be inferred from the honourable employment or commissions in a diplomatic capacity with which he was subsequently entrusted. He was sent on a very

delicate mission to France. The ostensible object of the embassy was to treat with the Governors of the Hansa Towns, and adjust matters then in abeyance between the King of England and Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, who had married the King's sister, Elizabeth of York, and probably to arrange a treaty of alliance between England and Burgundy against France, upon which Edward was then meditating an attack; but his secret mission was to treat with the Duke of Brittany for the giving up, and the bringing back to England, of the Earl of Pembroke and Prince Henry, Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII., whose freedom caused the King great uneasiness. Luckily for Henry VII., the Duke of Brittany civilly refused to deliver up the two Earls to Crosby, but promised to keep them securely under his own guardianship. For this consideration Edward paid the Duke a large pension under colour of a maintenance for the two princes.

The dimensions of Crosby Place, at least, bespeak wealth and afford sufficient evidence that Sir John, although possessed of the military spirit, also possessed that spirit of hospitality and charity which in every age has actuated our merchant princes. Though the time was long past when feudal custom crowded the board with a host of retainers, hospitality remained, and a hearty welcome was accorded that new class of men which an enlarged commerce had called into existence. For his friends he maintained an extravagant household, with a profusion of entertainment, and it needs little imagination to picture Sir John presiding in the Great Hall—spread with fresh rushes—the walls warmly tapestried—the bright flame from huge clumps of fir roaring up the lofty chimney—the great table well appointed—with strains of music from the minstrels' gallery—entertaining the Lord Mayor, surrounded by his fellow-citizens, his constituents, his household, and business men of many countries.

Mr. Richard Davey, in his intensely interesting "Pageant of London," gives a glimpse of the daily life of the people in the 15th century, and from this we obtain a picture of the manner in which Sir John's Bishopsgate household was conducted. After an early morning meal, at which the fluids were milk, mead, and light ale, Sir John, always a pious man, heard mass in company with members of his household either in his private oratory, or in the



The Banqueting Hall, *circa* 1470.

(*From a Sketch by Herbert Railton*)

Priory Church of St. Helen's. From thence he went to his warehouse to examine his correspondence and inspect the samples of goods brought by the Flemish and Lombard merchants. One might say he went through the ordinary routine of a merchant's business, which was not materially different from what it is now, except that the working day began very much earlier in the morning, and closed correspondingly soon. His warehouse was situate in Cony Hope Lane, near the Grocers' Hall, his business that of a wholesale mercer, or, as we should say to-day, a wholesale draper, dealing in silks and satins, Genoa velvets, Florentine and French brocades, cloth of gold and silver, Flemish linen, ribbons, laces and small finery. When either his business or his private letters were written on Saints' days they were dated in the following fashion:—"This day being the festival of the most glorious Virgin and Martyr Agnes, &c," and concluded with a pious reference to the bounty of the Deity and of our Blessed Ladye. Doubtless, he had to superintend the despatch of goods which in those days were sent as far as York and Edinburgh by means of pack-horses. By 11 a.m., which was the fashionable dinner-hour, Sir John's business affairs were over, and he was free to attend to his civic and social duties.

At least once a year Sir John and Lady Crosby, with all their employés, down to the groom boys and kitchen wenches, went in solemn procession to St. Paul's to venerate the relics of St. Erkenwald, his patron Saint, and on to Westminster Abbey to pray before the shrine of the Confessor, and we may be sure that Sir John and his lady wended their way, at least once in every three years, to Canterbury.

Only on Sundays and Holy days did Lady Crosby dine with Sir John and the family in the Great Hall, on which occasion the Lady Crosby made a stately entry, everybody rising to greet her, no one venturing to seat himself until after she had made a profound curtesy to her husband, and another, equally formal, to the general company, she finally seating herself at Sir John's right hand.

Sir John's business is said to have been so extensive that he must have employed a large staff, including apprentices, who lived, as was the practice, above the warehouse. According to time-honoured custom no great dinner or entertainment was ever given

by the rich merchant in that notable hall in Bishopsgate Street without the apprentices and clerks being included among the guests. Unfortunately the good and benevolent Sir John did not live long to enjoy the magnificence which his excellent taste and wealth had called into existence. As Stow quaintly puts it "So short a time enjoyed he that, his large and sumptuous building."

The death of Sir John Crosby occurred in 1475, just nine years after that of his first wife, who died about the time that he was negotiating the lease from Dame Alice Ashfeld in 1466. By his first wife he had several children, most of whom died during his lifetime. One daughter, however, Johanne, who had married one Talbot, seems to have been living at the date of his will, 6th March, 1471. To this daughter he bequeathed his estates in default of issue by his wife Anne, but, as a Johanne was buried in the same tomb with him, and it is known that he dictated the inscription which includes her name, it may be safely assumed that she died before her father, and after the date of his will. Sir John married a second time, probably in 1466, as in a letter from Sir John Paston to his brother under date March, 1466, I find the following reference, "And as for Crosseby, I understand not that ther is no maryage concluded between them, neverthesse ther is gret langage that it is lyke to be." Whether or not the Crosseby referred to was our John Crosby it is difficult to say with certainty. That he re-married at some date before 1471 is clearly evidenced by the inclusion of his second wife, Lady Anne, in his will of 6th March, 1471. Lady Anne survived him, but by her it is said he left no children.

At this period it would be a difficult matter to trace the disposition of Sir John's estate under the provisions of his will, but from certain data it would appear that he might possibly have left a son, born during his lifetime or posthumously, as it is recorded that a John Crosby on the 4th August, 1498, presented one, Robert Henshaw, to the Rectory of Hanworth.

It will be remembered that Sir John held the manor and advowson of that place, and that on the 18th September, 1471, he presented Richard Bishop to the Rectory (Newcourt, vol. 1, p. 629). He also provided in his will that if it were not found necessary to sell the Hanworth and Feltham Estates within two years after his

decease, "these two estates were to go to his wife, *or the child she might chance to be great with at his death.*" Therefore, if there be any value in the supposition that he did leave a son, then this John Crosby would be about 23 years of age, and would have the right to bestow the patronage. The previous presentation of the living having been made by the trustees of Sir John's estate on the 20th December, 1476, shows that they were acting on behalf of a minor, and would therefore have the power to present to the Rectory. The fact that the patronage, twenty-two years later (in 1498), was exercised by another John Crosby, seems to justify the supposition that the Alderman did leave a son, who, from expressions made use of in the will, must have been born subsequent to the date of that document.

Now, if it is true that Sir John Crosby did leave a son by his second wife, some of my readers may be curious to know, how it could happen that the representative of William Bracebridge, M.P., (the surviving executor under the will of Sir John Crosby) assigned the original lease of Crosby Place to Bartholomew Reed in 1501, which he could have had no power to do, if this alleged son and heir had been living, for at this time he would have been 26 years of age.

This difficulty is adequately met by Sir John Crosby's will, which provided unconditionally that his wife, Anne, should have for her life, the lease of Crosby Place; therefore, in any event, the son would have had no voice in the subsequent disposal of the lease. However, it is very probable that he died soon after attaining his majority, and thus the family of Sir John Crosby became extinct. The manor and advowson of Hanworth descending to Peter Christmas—a cousin of Sir John's—afterwards to his son, and he dying without issue, the lands descended to the Grocers' Company.

Since writing the foregoing, further and conclusive proof is forthcoming. I have been privileged to examine the Warden's Book (for the year 1518–19) of the Worshipful Company of Grocers, now carefully preserved in that Company's muniment room, and by the courtesy of R. V. Somers-Smith, Esq., Clerk to the Company, I am able to publish, for the first time, an extract which furnishes most important evidence in favour of the theory I have already outlined, that Sir John Crosby did leave a son. The extract runs:—

"BE IT REMEMBERED for ever to the laude and praise of
 " God and for the soules helth of Sir JOHN CROSBY Knight late
 " Alderman and Grocer of London deceased and also to the singular
 " comforte of the hole body of this Mistere of Grocers that the same
 " Sir John Crosby by his teastament and last wille amongs other willed
 " and bequeathed his Manour londs and tenements with their appur-
 " tenances of Hanworth in the County of Middilsex to Anne then
 " his wife and to her Assigns during her life whiche Anne at the
 " tyme of his decease was with childe whiche child was named
 " John Crosby son and heire to the said Sir John Crosby by reason
 " wherof the said Manoe londs tenements desended to the same
 " John Crosby the yonger as son and heire to the said Sir John
 " Crosby whiche John Crosby the yonger died withoute issue of
 " his body by reason whereof the said londs descended to Peter
 " Christmas cosyn and heire to the said Sir John Crosby and to
 " the heires of his body lawfully begotten whiche Peter had issue
 " Peter Christmas whiche Peter the elder died hav yng none other
 " issue of his body on live but onely the said Peter Christmas the
 " yonger by reason wherof the said Manor londs and tenements
 " with their appurtenances desended to the said Peter Christmas the
 " yonger as son and heire to the said Peter Christmas the elder
 " And afterwards the said Peter Christmas the yonger died without
 " issue of his body lawfully begotten After whose dethe the
 " sid Manor londs and tenements desended to the Maister and
 " Wardeyns of the Feliship of Grocers And they to make sale
 " therof by the assent and agreament of the Aldermen and Associatt
 " of the said Feliship to whom it shulde like theym and at as good
 " price as they shuld nowe reasonably do it And the money comyng
 " of the same sale they shulde dispose in dedes of charitee according
 " to the said last wille and testament BE IT ALSO REMEM-
 " BERED that it pleased our late Soveraigne King Henry the 7th to
 " make exchange and to give in recompence for the said Manor londs
 " and tenements of Hanworth other Manors londs and tenements
 " with the appurtenances in the Countie of Essex called Dagenhams
 " Cokerells and Wrightes As more at large it doith appere aswele
 " by an act of Parliament As by Endenture quadripertite endented
 " made betwene our Soveraigne Lord that nowe is King Henry the
 " 8th on the one partie And Sir John Huste Knight on the second
 " partie And the Wardeyns and Comonalty of the Mistere of the
 " Grocery of London on the thirde partie And Peter Christmas son
 " and heire of Peter Christmas deceased on the 4th partie whiche
 " Manors londs and tenements of Dagenham Cokerells and Wrights
 " instede of the said Manor of Hanworth were solde by the said
 " Feliship of Grocers to Sir John Petches Knight for the some of
 " £800:—sterling Whiche £800:—was disposed of by the said
 " Feliship in dedes of charities according to the said last wille and
 " testament as more playnly doth appere hereafter in a particular
 " reknyng in the end of this present Accompte."

Hanworth is pleasantly situated near Hampton Court, and it appears that Henry VIII. was delighted with it "above any other of his houses," and he having received this manor in exchange for other lands referred to above, fully accounts for the presentation of the rectory of Hanworth being made by the Crown subsequent to the year 1498.

The value of Sir John's estate may be imagined from the numerous provisions in his will. It is estimated that his money bequests and legacies would be worth something like £80,000 of our money to-day, and this amount does not include the Hanworth and Feltham Estate, nor the Crosby Hall estate, which, covering the extent of ground that it originally did, would be worth to-day, in ground rents only, a fortune "beyond the dreams of avarice."

He bequeathed to his daughter Johanne (afterwards Johanne Talbot) 200 marks,

£2,000 to his wife as her dower, besides all her and his clothes and furniture, and his lease under the Prioress of St. Helens, for her life.

500 marks to the repair of St. Helens.

£40 to be applied in diminishing the debts of the Prioress.

400 marks for a priest of good fame "to say mass and pray for my "soul for 40 years after my decease."

£100 to the repair of Bishopsgate, and London Wall.

£100 towards building a tower at the south-east of London Bridge.

£40 to the repair of Hanworth Church, Middlesex.

£30 among poor housekeepers in Bishopsgate Ward.

£10 towards the repair of Rochester Bridge, and to the Grocers' Company two large pots of silver, half chased, half gilt, weighing 13 lb. 5 oz. troy weight.

Besides various legacies to his relations and friends, as well as to his apprentices and servants, he bequeathed considerable sums to the nuns of St. Helen's, Holliwell, Stratford, and Sion; to the Carmelites, the Augustin and Crutched Friars, the Hospital of St. Mary Without Bishopsgate, Bedlam, St. Thomas Southwark, Elsing and St. Bartholomew, the Minorettes and the Charterhouse, the library of St. Peter's-upon-Cornhill, the gaols of London and Southwark, and to many friars, minors, and preachers generally.

The above sums were to be raised by the sale of his Manor of Hanworth, and other lands in Feltham in the same county, within two years after his decease; or, if there should be a sufficiency without such sale, the estates to go to his wife, "or child she might

chance to be great with at his death"; or, in default thereof to his daughter Johanne and her heirs; failing these, to his Cousin Peter Christemas and his heirs, and in default thereof to the Grocers' Company, to be sold and the amount divided among themselves.

EXTRACTS FROM THE WARDEN'S BOOK OF THE WORSHIPFUL
COMPANY OF GROCERS, 1518-1519.

ITEM receyved of the legacy and gift of Sir John Crosby Knight toward the charge of the pore Almes people of this place £10.

ITEM we the said Accomptaunts discharge us with the some of £335 19s. 2d. parcell of £800 for the Manors londs and tenements of Dagenham Cockerells and Wrights by us bought of Sir John Petchee Knight and by us paid and disposed particulerly in dedes of Almes and charitee according to the last will and testament of Sir John Crosby Knight deceased by the assent of the Aldermen and Associat of this Feliship as apperith more playnly in the ende of this Accompt And also by us dylyvered to our Successours Wardeyns in redy money for the fulle contentacon of the residue of the said £800. £197 7s. 6d. to be in like wise disposed in dedes of charitee according to the said last wille SUM £533 6s. 8d.

ITEM we the said Accomptaunts aske allowaunce for certeyn chargs growen of the Manours londs and tenements of Dagenhams Cokerells and Wrightes whiche sometyme were Sir John Hurste Knight and nowe belonging to this Feliship by reason of the gift and graunte of Sir John Petchee Knight which bought the same to make it mortmayne that is to sey costs in the law obteyning of the King's licence under his great seal fynding of offices before the Excheters and diverse other chargs and expenses aboute the same sum of all the said chargs amountith to the some of £65 8s. 7d.

THE DISPOSICON OF CERTEYN LEGACIES FOR SIR JOHN CROSBY KNIGHT FOR THE WELTH OF HIS SOULE ACCORDING TO HIS LAST WILLE AND TESTAMENT.

SUM TOTAL OF THE BEQUESTS OF SIR JOHN CROSBY KNIGHT PAIDE AS BEFORESAID £583 6s. 8d.

From the residue of his effects, after the decease of his wife, Lady Anne, an instance of the distribution remains in the Church of Theydon Gernon, in Essex, commemorated in the following inscription on a stone in the steeple:—

"Pray for the soules of Sir John Crosbie, Knight, late Alderman
"and Grocer of London; and, alsoe, of Dame Ann, and Annys, his
"wyves, of whose godys was gevyn . . . li toward the making of
"thys stepyll, ao V^o . . . que d'ni, 1520."

He appointed as his executors Thomas Rygby and William Bracebridge (M.P. for London in 1478 and 1483), with a legacy of



The Tomb of Sir John and Lady Crosby in the Church of St. Helen's.

£60 each, on condition that they undertook the execution of the will, which was proved on the 6th February, 1475.

It is very evident from the provisions of his will that Sir John Crosby was not very happy with his second wife, for he gave full instructions that he should be buried with his first wife, Agnes, and further provides that if his second wife, Anne

“ Hold her not contented with my bequest, then I will ordain that
“ all my said bequests to the said Anne, my wife, be utterly void, and
“ that the said Anne have such part only as the law will then
“ give her, without any other manner of favour to be showed to
“ her.”

Boundless as was his munificence during his life—standing out from his brethren conspicuous for his noble mansion, good-natured hospitality, liberality and kindness of heart—so in his last years did he show his understanding of the solemn truth that the happiness of wealth consists in its proper application, and from the long list of his charitable bequests to priories and religious houses, to hospitals, to the Bishopsgate poor, to London prison debtors, and for the repair of churches, we have ample proof of the devoutness, sincerity, justness, and generosity of the man.

Massinger, the dramatist, makes the following reference to Sir John Crosby:—

“ Happy were London if within her walls she had many such rich
“ men.”

Sir John was buried in the Church of St. Helen's, near the Chapel of the Holy Ghost, under a costly altar tomb, which he directs in his will to be laid over him and his first wife Agnes. This monument still exists, and is well preserved considering its antiquity. On the ledges of the tomb recline two beautifully sculptured alabaster figures of Sir John and Agnes, his wife. He is represented in plated armour, with rivetted knee pieces, his head resting on his helmet, and a dagger fastened by a belt, but wearing no sword. He wears a mantle with a collar of roses and suns alternating, the device or badge used by Edward IV. after the victory of Mortimer's Cross, when a mock sun appeared in the heavens, as if to grace the day. On the panelled quatrefoils in front of the tomb are shields, formerly blazoned with the Crosby arms. The inscription which once existed on the tomb, but which is now defaced, has been preserved to us by Weever in his “Ancient

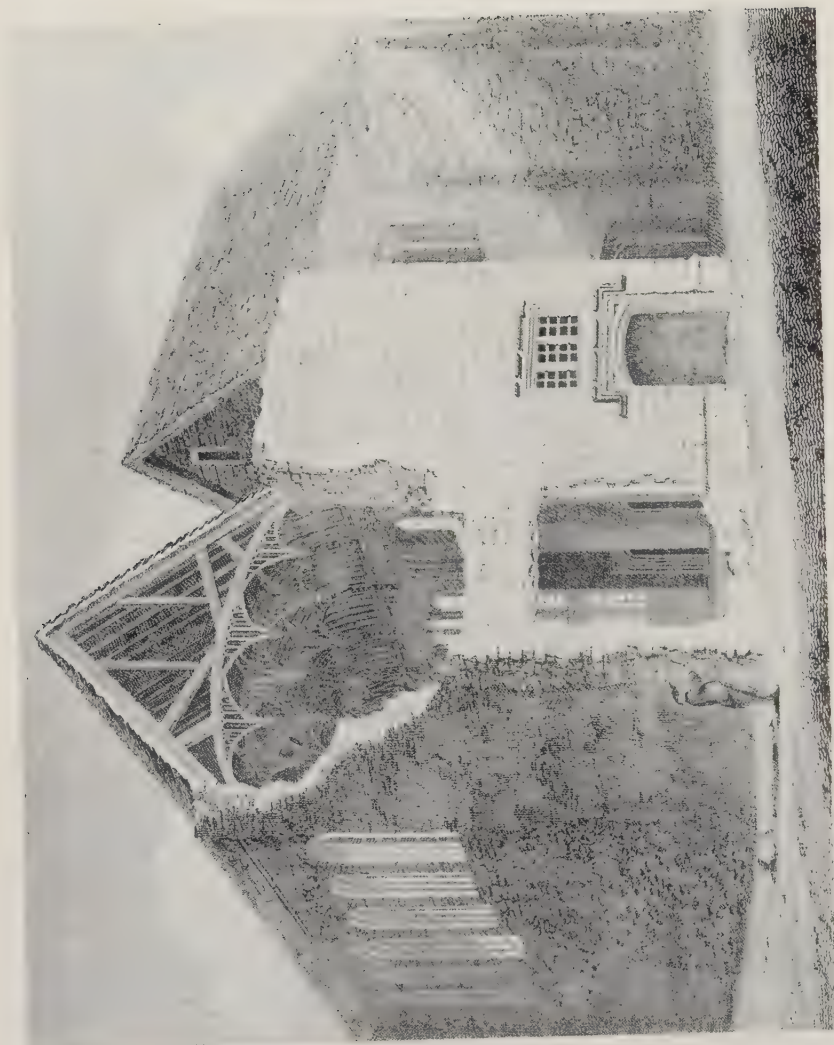
Funeral Monuments," 1631, from page 421 of which work comes the following exact transcription :—

Orate pro animabus Johannis Crosby Militis Ald. at que tempore vite Majoris Staple ville Caleis; et Agnetis Uxoris sue, ac Thome, Richardi Johannis, Johannis, Margarete, et Johanne liberorum ejusdem Johannis Crosby Militis ille obiit, 1475 et illa 1466. Quorum animabus propitetur Deus.

Which being translated reads :—

Pray for the souls of John Crosby, Soldier, Alderman, and during a portion of his time Mayor of the Staple of the Town of Calais, and of Agnes his wife, and of Thomas, Richard John, John, Margaret and Johanna, children of the same John Crosby, Soldier. He died 1475, and she 1466. To whose souls may God be merciful.

" Outstretched together are expressed,
He and his lady fair,
With hands uplifted on the breast
In attitude of prayer;
Grim-visaged, clad in armour, he;
With ancient robe, and headgear she."



View of Crosby Hall from the Priory Close of St. Helen's, showing part of the roof of the Banqueting Hall.

(From an engraving by Wise, after Nash)

CHAPTER II

THE ANCIENT BUILDING

THE materials for the following attempted reconstruction of Crosby Place are, first and chiefly, the lease granted by Dame Alice Wodehous and confirmed by Dame Alice Ashfeld in 1466—a translation of which is given in full—and after that the deeds and grants of the property to subsequent holders; the early nineteenth century surveys of the vaults by Mr. Edward A. Blackburn and Mr. Henry J. Hammon, some early maps, and a close personal survey of the Hall itself and also of existing streets and houses, which probably follow the lines set by the original boundaries of Sir John's property. We have no earlier description of the character of Crosby Place than that of Stow, more than 123 years after the founder's death, but it may be well, before commencing upon the measurements, etc., of the original site, to remind ourselves of the quaintly picturesque and rural state of Bishopsgate Street at that time. Its length, trend and track were exactly the same as to-day, running from Leadenhall Street to that point at the corner of Camomile Street where the City gate formerly stood. The street was surrounded by open country, there being only some dozen or so magnificent mansions of wealthy merchants from end to end, with a conduit almost in front of the Hall, and oil lanterns of the most primitive character slung from one side of the street to the other, as well as one hung up outside each house at dusk, on the summons of the watchman, "Hang out your lights."

The following is an exact translation of the Latin document granting a new lease of the site of Crosby Place to John Crosby:—

This indenture made between Alice Ashfelde Prioress of the House or Priory of St. Helen within Bisshoppesgate London and the Convent

of the same place on the one part and John Crosby citizen and grocer of London on the other part Witnesses that the said Prioress and Convent with the unanimous assent and consent of their whole chapter have granted yielded and to farm let to the said John All that tenement with houses upper chambers cellars garden adjacent belonging to the same tenement and all other appurtenances once in the tenure of Cataneus Pinellus [? Cataneo Pinello an Italian and not Cheyne Pinell] merchant of Genoa and now in the tenure of the said John Which and all of which the said John lately had of the lease of Alice Wodehous late Prioress of the house or church aforesaid and the Covent of the same situate and lying in Bisshoppesgate Strete in the parish of Saint Helen aforesaid in London together with a lane which extends in length from the East Gate of the said tenement as far as the corner or southern end of a certain small lane turning on the north into a close of the said Priory and with nine messuages which [? of which *i.e.* quorum, not quos] six messuages are situate and lying on the Royal street [or King's highway] called Bisshoppesgate streete aforesaid in length between the front of the aforesaid tenement and the front of the Tower appertaining to the said church and a certain messuage of the said nine messuages [*i.e.* dictorum messuagiorum, not dictos messuagios] which Katherine Catesby widow lately held is situated below the gate under the tower aforesaid and adjoining the six messuages aforesaid together with one vacant plot of land directly and lineally extending in length towards the east by the said messuage which the said Katherine Catesby lately held on the outside of the place or "poste" of the said tower abutting on the north part of the said six messuages [dictorum messuagiorum *v.* above] by the King's highway to the cemetery there fifty-eight feet and a-half standard measure and thence extending in breadth towards the South directly as far as a certain tenement there late in the tenure of Robert Smyth And two messuages of the said nine messuages are situate close together below the close of the said Prioress of which^{er} one was late in the tenure of the said John Crosby held of the lease of the said Alice Wodehous late Prioress and another messuage of the said two messuages was late in the tenure of the said Robert Smyth To HAVE and to hold all the said tenement with the houses cellars upper chambers garden adjacent belonging to the same tenement and its other appurtenances as fully and entirely as the said John Crosby held and had them before the date of these present letters together with the lane nine messuages and vacant plot of land aforesaid and other appurtenances to the said John Crosby his executors and assigns from the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist in the year of our Lord One thousand four hundred and sixty six And in the sixth year of the reign of King Edward the Fourth after the Conquest until the end and term of ninety and nine years from thence next following and fully to be completed PAYING thence annually during the said term to the said Prioress and Convent and their successors eleven pounds six shillings

and eight pence of good and lawful money of England at the four terms in the year usual in the City of London by equal portions And if the said annual rent be in arrear either in part or entirely and not paid one month after any of the said four terms when it ought to be paid as aforesaid Then it shall be lawful for the said Prioress and Convent and their successors to enter and distrain upon the said tenements messuages and lane with appurtenances and lawfully to take away remove and hold in their own hands the distrains thus levied until full and satisfactory payment be made of the said rent with arrears of the same if there be any And if the said annual rent be in arrear in part or entirely and not paid in half a year after any of the said terms in which as is stated it should be paid and in the meantime application be made at the said tenement That then the said John grants to the said Prioress and Convent by these present letters that he will pay to the said Prioress and Convent and their successors thirteen shillings and four pence of legal money of England by way of a fine over and above the said annual rent and the arrears of the same and this as often as the said annual rent be in arrear and not paid in part or entirely in half a year beyond any term of payment as above limited if it be demanded in the form aforesaid And that then it may be lawful to the said Prioress and Convent and their successors as well for the said annual rent being in arrear and for all arrears thence arising as for the non-payment of the said thirteen shillings and four pence by way of a fine and the arrears thence arising To distrain in all the said tenements messuages vacant plots and lanes and to take away remove and hold in their own possession the distrains thus levied until they receive full satisfaction and payment for the rent and fine and the arrears if any there be And if the said annual rent be in arrear in part or entirely and not paid by one whole year after any of the terms when payment should be made as above set forth and demand be made at the said tenement and sufficient distrain for the arrears of the said annual rent be not then found there thence it may and shall be lawful to the said Prioress and Convent and their successors to re-enter into all the said tenements and messuages with the other premises and their appurtenances and have and possess them again as in their former state and entirely expel and remove thence the said John Crosby his executors and assigns this present lease notwithstanding And the said John Crosby his executors and assigns will well and competently repair maintain pave and keep in order the said tenement messuage with houses upper chambers cellars above said with all the buildings within the said tenement and messuage and also a vacant plot of land and a line to be made or built together with a pavement in the High Way aforesaid opposite the said tenement and messuage and with the pavement of the said lane At their own expense during the said term And the said Prioress and Convent grant for themselves and their successors to the said John by these present letters that it shall be lawful to the said John his executors and assigns to take down remove

transport transform replace repair or rebuild all and singular buildings which are in and on the said tenement and messuage with a vacant plot of land and lane aforesaid and other premises made and constructed or in the future to be made and constructed Within the said tenement messuage vacant plot of land and lane at his own pleasure when and where he please On condition that such buildings thus taken or to be taken down in the repair and re-building of the same may be in as good as or better state than they now are And that further it shall be lawful to the said John Crosby his executors and assigns to re-build again all and singular other buildings in and upon all and singular the aforesaid premises at their own pleasure when and as often as it pleases them or any one of them during the said term Saving always and reserving to the said Prioress and Convent and their successors for them their tenants servants lessees free ingress and egress in and upon the said lane leased to the said John during the said term And further the said Prioress and Convent grant for them and their successors to the said John Crosby his executors and assigns by these presents for them and their servants free egress and ingress for carrying and re-carrying in waggons or carts drawn by horse or by hand all and singular necessities And of going returning and riding along the said lane from the said tenement straight to a certain road turning off on the south by the church of St. Andrew in Cornhill [Undershaft] London and from the same road to and as far as the lane and tenement aforesaid at all times during the said term And the said Prioress and Convent and their successors will warrant acquit and defend the said tenement with houses upper chambers cellars garden adjacent belonging to the said tenement and its other appurtenances together with the lane nine messuages and vacant plot of land and its appurtenances under the form and conditions as aforesaid with free ingress and egress To the said John Crosby his executors and assigns against all men by these present letters unto the end and term of ninety-nine years as aforesaid In witness of which thing the said Prioress and Convent have interchangeably set their common seal and the said John Crosby his seal to these Indentures Given at London in the Chapter House of the said Prioress and Convent in the feast and year aforesaid. BERNARD.

Excavations which took place early in 1836, revealed extensive Roman tessellated pavements and foundations under the houses in the south-west angle of Crosby Square. Miss Maria Hackett, who happened at that time to be living close to the spot, preserved a portion of the pavement, and from her observations it was supposed that upon the site of Crosby Place, at a depth of 12 or 14 ft., there were ancient foundations of chalk, the direction of which was due north and south.

In 1871 and again in 1873, very fine specimens of Roman pave-



Ground Plan of Crosby Place, *circa* 1594.

(From an engraving by H. J. Hammon)

ment were found while excavating a portion of the site, and more recently, another which is said to have been part of the atrium of a villa of the time of Constantine (A.D. 275) was unearthed at No. 25, Bishopsgate Street Within, while making foundations for new premises in 1902. Here two fine arches were uncovered, and it was assumed that these were probably connected with the crypt of the mansion, or the foundations of the original entrance to the outer court from which the great hall opened. The style of architecture was said to belong to the 15th century.

In the previous chapter, I have shown that Sir John Crosby was already residing in a great mansion at the time he obtained a renewal of the lease from Alice Ashfeld, which mansion was formerly occupied by one Cataneo Pinello.

Whether Crosby demolished the whole structure and rebuilt Crosby Place, or allowed the original edifice to stand as part of his palace, with the addition of the great banqueting hall and adjoining apartments, it is now impossible to say, but from the discoveries made in the years referred to, Crosby Place seems to have been erected on the site of an earlier house, itself built upon the ruins of an ancient Roman villa, as in the case of St. Helen's Priory, which is said to have been built upon Roman foundations.

It may be gathered from the ground plan that the boundaries of the Palace were such as to give an irregular square, whose longest side faced the west, and that it was so environed by buildings on the south and east, and partly on the north and west sides, as to make the mansion exteriorly invisible except from the passage leading from the principal gateway, or Foregate, to what is at present Crosby Square. The line of buildings extended from north to south along Bishopsgate Street Within, for a distance of about 240 ft., and then running slightly in a south-easterly direction at the back of other tenements for a further 130 ft., having the belfry and gateway leading into the Priory Close of St. Helen's for its northern boundary, and probably No. 12, Bishopsgate Street for its southern extremity. Its greatest depth would have been about 300 ft. in a line from Bishopsgate Street, through the archway formerly leading under the Minstrels' Gallery to the south-east quadrangle (now Crosby Square), and through a gateway in the south-east corner of the Square along the lane leading towards St. Mary Axe. This is

evidenced by the fact that the Jewish Synagogue in Great St. Helen's occupies the site of the "most large warehouse" built by Sir John Spencer during his tenancy a little more than a hundred years later, on the land originally leased to Sir John Crosby by Alice Wodehous.

On the north side, the property extended about 160 ft., leading from Bishopsgate Street, under the Belfry (now the entrance to St. Helen's Church), to No. 6, Great St. Helen's, which is probably built on the site of "a certain small lane" leading from the Priory Close towards "Crosbie's Street" (now Great St. Helen's), which runs into St. Mary Axe. This lane or passage is marked on Horwood's Map of 1799, but perhaps it is more clearly shown on Aggas' Map of 1560. On the southern boundary it may be said to have extended from a point somewhere about No. 12, Bishopsgate Street, passing the south side of the "most large warehouse" now the Jewish Synagogue, and then in a north-east direction towards Great St. Helen's, leading into St. Mary Axe, and measuring perhaps from front to back some 300 ft.

The edifice itself consisted of the Great Banqueting Hall, the smaller Dining Parlour (afterwards divided by a floor and known as the Council Chamber with the Throne Room above), the Chapel, State apartments, Noblemen's lodgings, butler's and bursar's lodgings, porters' quarters, the great kitchens, brewhouse, bakehouse, larders, stables, &c., together with courts probably to the number of four, and various sheds and outhouses. Though the open country was so near at hand, there are signs that the property included extensive gardens, three grass plots and a large bowling green.

About Crosby's time, regular quadrangular mansions—as well from security and convenience as from imitation of the older defensible houses—became popular with those who aimed at a superior style of domestic architecture, suitable for maintaining a large establishment, and for the entertainment and lodging of ambassadors and their retinues. In its original design, comfort and accommodation were mainly considered, and doubtless it was as convenient in respect of the size and number of its apartments as the whole must have been grand and beautiful; and it is to be regretted that nothing above ground remains to us to prove the



Plan of Bishopgate Within, showing Crosby Place.

(From Aggas' Map, circa 1560)

extent of its apartments on the south side. But an underground examination, carried out by Mr. Blackburn and Mr. Hammon between the years 1832 and 1844, gave very evident indications of its style and magnitude. Portions of groined vaults and a crypt under the houses in Crosby Square and the adjoining property are said to exist beneath the site of the original state apartments and various offices, extending south in a line with the Great Hall for a distance of about 170 ft., while a corresponding range ran eastward as far as the alley or lane referred to.

It would appear that the edifice had four courts, one of which may be made out even at this day. The backs of the premises removed to make way for Threadneedle House (Nos. 28 to 31, Bishopsgate Street) forming the one side, the Large Hall the second, and having for its third, or north side, what we remember as being the Council Chamber, while the fourth was formed by the Chapel on the south of the present entrance to Crosby Square. Another or inner court is represented by the present Crosby Square, but of the others there is scarcely a trace.

Referring to the general plan of the manorial house of the 15th and 16th centuries, as gleaned from documents and engravings, Dr. Henry Hallam, in a section dealing with "The Progress of Civil Architecture," contained in vol. 3 of his "Middle Ages," says that "the usual arrangement consisted of an entrance passage running through the house, with a hall on one side, a parlour beyond, and one or two chambers above, and on the opposite side a kitchen, pantry and other offices."

The principal access to Crosby Place was gained through a gateway, known as the Foregate, in Bishopsgate Street, along the passage referred to, leaving on the left the dining parlour with its beautiful oriel, and on the right the chapel, state apartments, and servants' quarters. Then passes under the Minstrels' Gallery at the south end of the Great Hall, built over the passage, into the inner court with a range of apartments for guests, etc., on the right, and gardens at the back of them, while on the left one would pass the kitchens, bakehouse, brewhouse, larders, with the stables, sheds, outhouses, at the extreme back of the property adjoining the alley or lane referred to in the lease.

At the south-eastern angle of the present Crosby Square, a

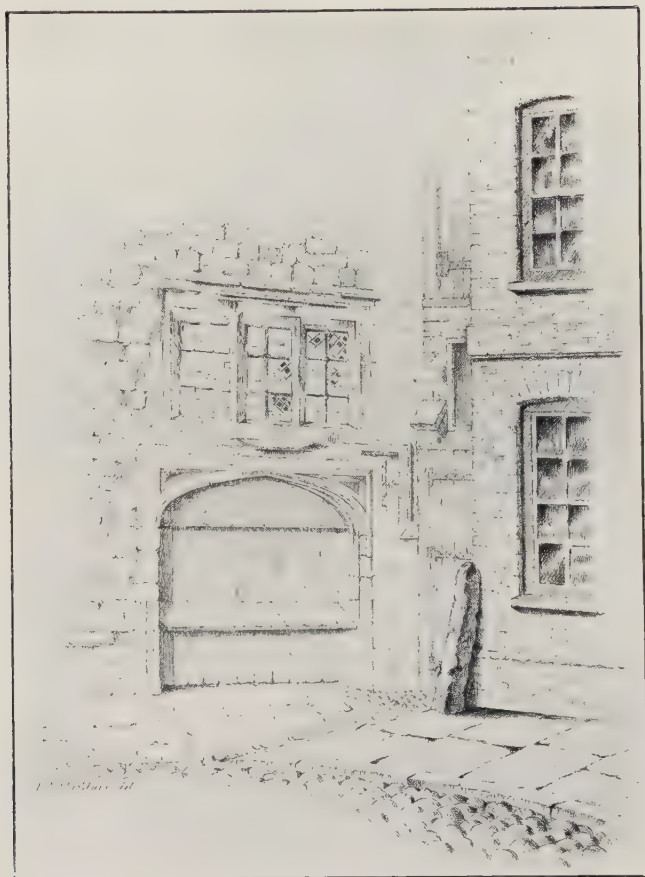
passage under the houses leads through what was formerly a gateway of some degree of antiquity, into a narrow lane, described on some early maps as Crosby Street, but now known as Great St. Helen's, leading to St. Mary Axe and united with the corner of "a certain lane" which forms the communication between St. Helen's Church and St. Mary Axe. As this gateway does not appear to have ever formed any part of a larger building, it was probably used as a back entrance to the mansion and from the gardens and offices behind.

We will retrace our steps across the inner court (now Crosby Square) and enter the Great or Common Hall, conspicuous for its proportions and ornament, which seems to have been the master feature of the cluster of edifices. In this case, as in many others, the hall gave the name to the whole structure.

The original door or doors led into a passage behind a sumptuous screen of timber, rising the whole height of the room, and concealing the appearance of a gallery, from which, however, a view of the Hall was obtained through a series of small arches. The extent of this noble room, from the stone wall which separated it from the vestibule in the north, to the extreme south end, including the Minstrels' Gallery, was 69 ft. long, 27 ft. wide and 40 ft. high at its highest point. On the west side of the Hall are six beautiful flat pointed windows at a considerable elevation from the ground, each measuring 11 ft. 6 in. high by 5 ft. 6 in. wide, with a finely proportioned semi-octangular bayed window, or oriel as it is called. This graceful bay, with its richly groined roof, exhibits an elegant pattern of stone tracery of the most delicate workmanship, and is regarded as one of the most beautiful specimens of the kind remaining. It occupies the space of two of the ordinary windows, is 10 ft. 10 in. wide, while the recess is no less than 8 ft. 5 in. deep, rising the whole height of the Hall. It is enriched by a series of ribs and bosses of sculptured fruit, flowers, etc., with the helmet and crest of Sir John Crosby on the centre one, larger than the rest, this being the only heraldic device now recognisable. At right angles with the window, and between it and the fireplace, would be placed the great table for the master of the house; as Aubrey says, "the Lords of Manours did eate in their greate Gothique Halls at the high table or Oriole, the folk at the side tables" (Aubrey MS.).



The Ancient Gateway, forming the back entrance to the Palace from St. Mary Axe. The smaller view shows the entrance to the Banqueting Hall from the Priory Close.



Entrance to Crosby Place from the Priory Close.

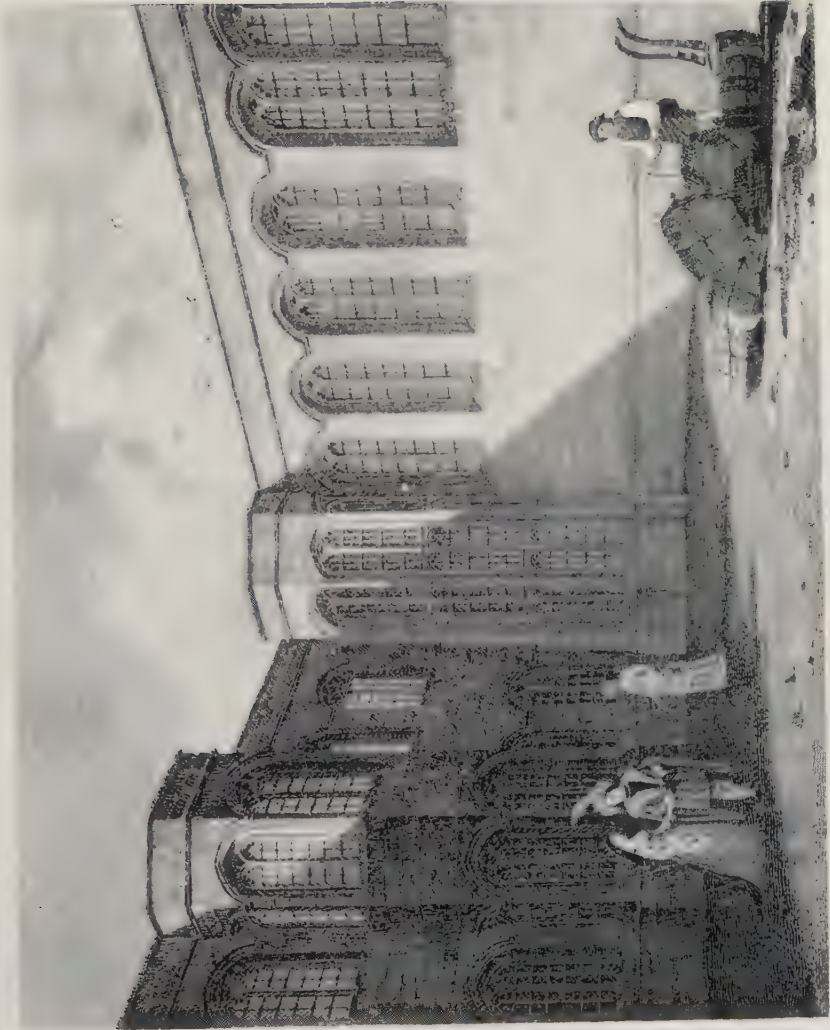
(From an engraving by E. L. Blackburn)

Adjoining the oriel was a handsome doorway which communicated with the so-called Council Chamber and Throne Room above. Over this door, two windows, at a much higher level than the others, formerly existed, evidently to light the north end of the majestic room, where the dais might have been situated—had such an one been used—but these are now bricked in. On the east side six windows may be counted, the oriel being here omitted. At its southern end was formerly an adjoining apartment on the attic storey, probably the upper part of a suite of rooms extending over the entrance to Crosby Square, and about 12 ft. deep. From the north-west corner of the Hall a richly moulded doorway opened to the withdrawing room or vestibule, about 19 ft. square, separated from the Hall by a stone wall, but now part of it. From this apartment another door gave access to the “void piece of land” in the Priory Close, and which was probably a small private garden or “pleasaunce” annexed to the small hall commonly known as the Council Room and the Throne Room.

Nothing can be conceived in finer style than the oak roof, which is of most exquisite workmanship, and is the most splendid part of the interior. It is on the principle of the four-centred arch common to its period, composed of three longitudinal and nine transverse beams, decorated with an almost unparalleled profusion of ornament, whose intersections form 27 small pointed arches, with the same number of beautiful drops or pendants. The main arches are supported by brackets attached to the walls. These appendages are exquisitely formed, and the decorations composed of beautiful tracery. An ornamental frieze bordered the roof, variously carved in wood, depicting grotesque heads, white roses, antique shields, and other emblematical devices. The floor was originally paved with marble laid diamond-wise, but both tint and pattern are now defaced. Contrary to the usual practice of those times, there was on the eastern side of the Hall a magnificent fireplace—still existing—calculated to give warmth even to so large an area, yet there are indications of a louvre or lantern opening in the roof, a conspicuous feature in most of the earlier halls, the purpose of which was to allow an escape for the smoke from the fire usually made on a hearth in the middle of the room; but in the case of Crosby Hall it would appear to have

been introduced as an ornament rather than for the purpose for which they were ordinarily used, as the paved floor bears no sign of ever having borne a hearth. The opening of the fireplace referred to measures 7 ft. 8 in. by 5 ft. 6 in., but the outside measurement of the mouldings would make it 10 ft. 6 in. by 6 ft. 10 in. The wall-space below the windows, which is considerable, was in the time of Crosby covered with arras or fine tapestry, or perhaps by fresco painting, as shown in the illustration.

West of the Hall was a lofty chamber, the original purpose of which is not easily ascertained after so long a time, mutilated as it has been and devoted to all manner of purposes. At a later date, it was divided into two apartments, and known as the Throne Room and Council Chamber, so called, possibly, from the circumstance that the citizens of London were said to have here offered the Crown to Richard Duke of Gloucester in the upper room; but one might hazard an opinion that it was formerly used as a hall for gatherings of a more private character than was the case with the Great or Common Hall. The furniture of the room would consist of rude oak benches and tables, with stools and seats fixed to the walls, and, like the principal rooms of houses of that period, the walls were "hung with arras green and blue," and the floors strewn with hay, straw or rushes, the common floor covering in those days. FitzStephen, the historian, mentions that Thomas à Becket's apartments were every day covered with clean straw, hay, or rushes, lest the gentlemen who paid court to him, and who could not, by reason of their great number, find a place at table, should soil their fine clothes by sitting on a dirty floor. This room had a stone fireplace on its northern side, even more massive than that in the Great Hall, projecting from the wall about 3 ft., and which, I am happy to say, was carefully preserved at the recent demolition of the rest of the building. Immediately opposite this chimney-piece was an oriel window, more elegant, but smaller, than that in the Hall. In the illustration reproduced from Wilkinson's "*Londina Illustrata*," this oriel and the two ranges of windows are shown, but probably drawn out of proportion, and it will be seen that the artist has omitted the small postern door which formerly occupied the angle formed by the junction of the wall of the great Dining Room, with that of the Banqueting Hall. It is very probable that



South-West View of the principal Quadrangle or Outer Court.

(From an engraving by S. Rawle, after Nash)



THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
looking East towards the Great Banqueting Hall.

(From an engraving by S. Rawle, after Nash)

the great Dining Room was originally open to the roof, which was but little inferior to that of the Hall, and is described as having had a richly painted and gilded ceiling, with a "four-centred arch, divided into rows of square panels, each panel filled with tracery." There were four entrances into this room, one from the Great Hall, one from the courtyard, one from the ante-chamber, and one from St. Helen's Close.

It is observable that the Church of St. Helen's has no steeple except a small wooden erection of later times. Where the steeple or bell-house of St. Helen's Priory formerly stood no trace remains, but it is highly probable that a detached campanile, which is mentioned in a later lease to Antonio Bonvisi, did exist, and no doubt occupied the site of the present gateway leading to Great St. Helen's from Bishopsgate Street, and in that position served the double purpose of a bell-tower and gateway to the Priory Close. The only detached campanile in England now remaining is that at Chichester.

Nearly four-and-a-half centuries have passed over Crosby Hall since its founder laid his hand to its foundation-stone, and yet it still remains with its glorious roof, its fine proportions, and its beautiful oriel, almost as perfect to-day as when the architect gave his finishing touches to it in the days of the Plantagenets. In examining minutely the beauties of this elegant Hall, one is led to regret that the other parts of so truly sumptuous an edifice should have been destroyed, or that the Hall only still existing and so highly deserving of admiration should have been appropriated to uses far beneath the dignity of its original purpose.

Having now endeavoured to give some idea of the ancient character and arrangement of Crosby Place, I propose to trace its history through the period intervening between the date of its completion and the present time.

CHAPTER III

TENANCY OF RICHARD GLOUCESTER

HOW long, if at all, Lady Anne Crosby resided at Crosby Place after the death of Sir John in 1475, is doubtful. In any event the term could not have been more than eight years, since in 1483 we have assurance that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was most certainly domiciled there.

With memories of this man, "the last and worst of the Plantagenets," Crosby Place teems; there could be no more powerful tenant than a King of England, and under him it rose to its apogee. Some accept 1476, the year following Sir John's death, as the date of Richard's incoming, but I regard this as doubtful, and should be disposed to fix the year 1483 for that event. He was, without doubt, a tenant under Sir John Crosby's executors (Sir Thomas Rygby and William Bracebridge, M.P.), who jointly retained an interest in the lease between the years 1475-1501, when they assigned the lease to Sir Bartholomew Reed.

Edward IV. died at Westminster on the 9th April, 1483, while Richard was engaged in the north of England, and the King left to Richard the care of the family and kingdom during the minority of the eldest son Edward, then only 13 years of age. It was arranged that the coronation of the young King should take place on May 4th, and that the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Sergeants-at-Arms, Sword-bearer and Members of the City Guilds to the number of 410 should ride out to Hornsey to meet the Prince and escort him to the City, but on that day Gloucester arrived in London with a great retinue, and was acknowledged by the assembly of Peers as Protector and Defender of the kingdom, to the great disappointment of the Queen Dowager, who took sanctuary at Westminster, while, according to Fabian—probably an eye-witness of many events of



RICHARD III., nicknamed "Crouchback."
(Painter unknown.)

(Licensed to reproduce from a Copyright photograph, by payment to Mr. E. Walker)

that day—in his *Chronicles* (Ellis' 1811 edition), “the sayd Duke caused the Kyng to be removed to the Towre, and he lodgid himselfe in Crosbye's Place in Bysshoppisgate Strete,” so that Crosbie's mansion became a palace in fact as well as by reputation. The choice of this palace may be included among the devices by which the wily intriguer Richard achieved success, for in its magnificent apartments he was able to hold a sort of regal state.

The coronation of the young King was then fixed for the 22nd June, but on the 9th of that month the Protector held a Council which he artfully divided into two sections, and ordered that those who had distinguished themselves by their attachment to the young King (Lords Stanley and Hastings, the Bishop of Ely, and others) should hold their sittings at Baynard's Castle, while he held private consultations with his more confidential friends at Crosby Place, and for some time deserted the regular Council at the Castle. There is the following reference to this in Hall's *Chronicle* (1809), page 358 :—

“When the Protectour had both the chyldren in his possession, he then began to thirst to see the end of his enterprise, and to auoyde al suspicion, he caused all the lordes whiche he knewe to bee faithfull to the Kyng to assemble at Baynardes Castle to com'en [commune] of the ordre of the coronacion, whyle he and other of his complices and of his affinitee at Crosbies place contriued the contrary and to make the protecteur Kyng . . . for litle and litle all folke drewe from the tower where the Kyng was and drew to Crosbies place.”

Sir Thomas More's testimony is clear to the same purpose. He says :—

“All folke withdrew from the tower, and drew unto Crosbies place in Bishops gates strete wher the protectour kept his house—hold.”

He shortly began imparting to Buckingham and others his ambitious designs and his plans for the removal of Earl Rivers and Earl Grey, and for the murder of the two young princes Edward V. and the Duke of York, by whose removal he paved his way to the throne. Edward at that time was confined in the Tower, and the Duke of York was, after some little delay, sent into the same safe custody, having been tricked away from the protection of his mother. Lord Hastings, their best defender, had relied on his intimate friend Catesby the lawyer, for information as to events of

a threatening nature that might be happening at Crosby Place, but Richard bribed the treacherous villain Catesby over to his own side and made him a creature of his own, working conjointly with Ratcliffe and Lovel. It is this precious trinity which is referred to in the well-known distich :

“The rat, the cat, and Lovel the dog
Rule all England under the Hog.”

It was in the Council Chamber of Crosby Place that Richard prepared the document which, in the King's name, justified Hastings' sudden execution, and there that he devised the bold stroke that was to fall on the morrow. There it was that in the morning he took his final council with Catesby before departing to the meeting at the Tower. After opening the business of the meeting he excused himself on a matter of urgency. An hour later he returned with a strangely altered demeanour and surprised those present by inquiring what punishment was deserved by those who had conspired against him. “These traitors,” cried the ‘Crookback Protector,’ “are the sorceress, my brother's wife, the Queen Dowager, and Jane Shore his mistress, and others with her; see how they have destroyed and consumed my body by their incantations and witchcraft,” whereupon he bared his left arm, emaciated and withered to the elbow as, according to the story related by Sir Thomas More, “it was never other from his birth.” Hastings answered that if they had so done they merited the punishment of traitors, although he knew full well that the Duke had been born humpbacked and with his arm thus deformed. “What!” said Richard, turning to Hastings, “dost thou serve me with ifs and ands? I tell thee they have done it! You are the chief abettor of that witch Shore, you are yourself a traitor, and I swear by St. Paul that I will not dine before your head be brought me.” Then he struck his fist violently upon the Council table, when armed men rushed in and arrested Hastings. He was immediately taken to the Tower Green, where, without further trial and without law, on a trumped-up charge of conspiracy, he was beheaded upon a trunk of a tree which stood there. Richard then sent for the Mayor, Aldermen and citizens, and gave them his version of the execution, leading them to believe

that it was only by this prompt action that he had escaped assassination. He then seized the property of Jane Shore, and caused her to do penance in the streets with a lighted taper as a woman of loose character, but his actual object was to give her a distaste for further political intrigue.

Richard did not hesitate to remove every obstruction which lay between him and the throne, and therefore on 25th June, without trial in any form, Earls Rivers and Grey and Sir Thomas Vaughan were also executed. The young King was taken to the Tower to keep company with his brother, and the coronation was now deferred until the 2nd November, Richard fearing that if once the King was crowned the project of transferring the crown to his own head would fail. He now thought it advisable to ascertain how public opinion stood towards him as claimant. At this time Sir Edmund Shaw, called "the creature of Richard III.," was Lord Mayor, and we are told that he was Gloucester's goldsmith, and that he purchased from Richard several pieces of plate when he was in need of funds for his coronation. Sir Edmund Shaw had a brother, an eminent preacher, whom Richard engaged to preach a sermon at St. Paul's Cross in support of his claim to the throne. Dr. Shaw took as his text "Bastard slips shall take no deep root," and it is said that, in its application, he hesitated at nothing. He not only attempted to persuade the people that the late King had committed bigamy by previously marrying Lady Butler, but that he was illegitimate, as were also both of the Princes.

This attempt to influence the citizens was a dismal failure, and Dr. Shaw was never able to show his face again. Two days later, however, the Lord Mayor summoned a general assembly, consisting of the Mayor, Aldermen and citizens, at the Guildhall, the back of the Hall having been packed with Gloucester's partizans. Buckingham delivered a speech of great length, in which he dwelt upon Edward's grossly immoral life, and put the question, "Will you have the Protector assume the Crown?" There was an obstinate silence. The Recorder Fitzwilliam, at the Mayor's command, then asked if they would have Richard as their king, when a cry of assent arose from a few at the back of the Hall, and was taken up by a few others. This result was so disappointing that Buckingham threatened that the "Commons" would determine

the matter without them, but would wish to have the City with them, thus admitting the prescriptive right of London to a large share in the election of the King. The voice of the few partizans was accepted as the voice of the City, and according to tradition, the Mayor—Sir Thomas Billesdon—and a deputation of citizens came to Richard at Crosby Place with professions of their loyalty and desired him to accept the Crown, but whether this was so or not is very doubtful, as some historians have it that Richard, fearing things might take an unfavourable turn, decided that the ceremony should take place near the water's edge, at Baynard's Castle, the palace of his mother, that very mother whom, but an hour or two earlier he had, by the lips of his agent, charged with being the mother of illegitimate children.

The honour of being the scene where the Crown was offered for Richard's acceptance therefore lies between Baynard's Castle and Crosby Place, and in the lack of more evidence, there it must remain. I have told the plain story of Richard from the humble sources, with the ever-present tantalising knowledge that the most magical pen in all the world has already told the tale, could I but quote it all. Not by Richard's kingship or crimes; not by its picturesque appearance, nor by the fame of any of its tenants is Crosby Place assured of undying remembrance, but by the simple fact that three references to the mansion are to be found in the text of Shakespeare's historical tragedy "Richard III." Wherever there is a lover of Shakespeare—that is to say, over the whole world—Crosby Place is known, and it has a sure and certain hope of immortality, even when its material fabric shall have been carted away into diverse obscurity.

Following the chroniclers he used in constructing his tragedy, Shakespeare has not laid one scene there, though the whole of the action revolved close about it, and were my task other than the narration of facts only as they directly concern this mansion, large quotations might be made.

The first mention of Crosby Place occurs towards the end of the scene of Gloucester's wooing of Lady Anne Nevil, widow of Edward Prince of Wales, reported, probably truly, to have been murdered by Gloucester, after the battle of Tewkesbury. Shakespeare, of course, accepts Gloucester's guilt.



Lord Mayor and Citizens offering the Crown to Richard, Duke of Gloucester,
at Baynard's Castle, 26th June, 1483.

*From the fresco by Sigismund Goetze, in the Royal Exchange.
(Copyright. The property of the artist)*

Gloucester. "And if thy poor devoted suppliant may
But beg one favour at thy gracious hand,
Thou dost confirm his happiness for ever."

Anne. "What is it?"

Gloucester. "That it would please thee leave these sad designs
To him that hath more cause to be a mourner,
And presently repair to Crosby Place;
Where, after I have solemnly interr'd
At Chertsey Monastery this noble king,
And wet his grave with my repentant tears,
I will with all expedient duty see you." (*Act i., scene 1.*)

To make Richard the possessor of Crosby Place at this period appears to have been a chronological error on the part of the poet. It is highly improbable that Crosby would vacate his mansion, even for Gloucester, within a few months after having completed its construction; and it is unlikely, too, that Richard held the lease in the year 1478, the date upon which the next incident occurs, as depicted in Act i., scene 3, where Richard is giving the warrant to the murderers who have been commissioned to assassinate Clarence, and directing them where to find him afterwards, to give information of the accomplishment of their evil deed.

Gloucester. "Are you now going to dispatch this deed?"

First Murderer. "We are, my lord; and come to have the warrant,
That we may be admitted where he is."

Gloucester. "Well thought upon; I have it here about me.
When you have done, repair to Crosby Place."

(*Gives the warrant.*)

The third mention is at Act iii., scene 1, where Richard and Buckingham send Catesby to sound Lord Hastings "as it were far off," upon the fixity of his allegiance to the young King.

Buckingham. "Good Catesby, go effect this business soundly."

Catesby. "My good lords both, with all the heed I may."

Gloucester. "Shall we hear from you, Catesby, ere we sleep?"

Catesby. "You shall, my lord."

Gloucester. "At Crosby Place, there shall you find us both."

The dates of the actual events alluded to in these extracts are respectively 1471, 1478 and 1483, and, as we have already said, it is certain that at the two earlier dates, and in all probability at the later also, Richard was not living at Crosby Place. Shakespeare had the proper disregard for dates and places when he was bent on securing dramatic sequence and effect. His mention of Crosby

Place may be set down to his familiarity with the place and his apprehension of the fact that, being widely known to the mass of his audiences as Richard's residence, its introduction in that capacity would subserve that dramatic truth which, within the walls of the theatre, is the sole and only truth. In any case, there the name stands like the fly in amber, preserved for all time, only, in this case, the severest critic could not add that the thing itself was "neither rich nor rare."

During the tenancy of Richard, it is probable that the great Hall added to its already varied uses by being temporarily employed as a theatre. Hallam, in his "Literature of Europe," mentions that there was a company of players in the establishment of Richard, while Duke of Gloucester. They would have performed only the crudest of morality plays, enlivened by the horseplay of the "Vice," but poor as was the fare provided, they added one more to the experiences of the old Hall.

CHAPTER IV

LORD MAYORS REED AND REST, 1501-1519

RICHARD'S acceptance of the Crown now left Crosby Place vacant, and it is not recorded positively who leased it during the next 18 years, that is to say, from the date of Gloucester's coronation until Sir Bartholomew Reed became the tenant, but it is not unlikely that Gloucester, in 1488, had taken the mansion on a short lease, say of 21 years, and finding no use for it on his accession to the throne, seeing that he kept his Court at Westminster or Baynard's Castle, he allowed Crosby Place to be used for the reception of various foreign embassies to this country, and as the mansion house or residence of Lord Mayors. One thing is very certain, however, that the interest in the leasehold was still held by Lady Crosby or the executors under Sir John Crosby's will until 1501, and it again reverted to the executors in 1507. In the meantime an embassy was lodged in the Palace in the year 1495, as may be gathered from the following extract from the Chronicles of Vitellius:—

“Also upon Candylmesse Evyn, the frost enduryng, was receyued
 “into London an honorable Ambassade from the Duke of Burgoyne
 “which was conveyd by dyvers lordes and gentilmen unto Crosbyes
 “place, and there loggad; wherof the chief man of theym was called
 “Lord Bevir, or otherwyse Erle of Camfere.”

The purpose of this mission I have been unable to trace.

On January 24, 1501, the leasehold passed to Sir Bartholomew Reed, to whom it was assigned by the executors of John Easefloy, the representative of Sir John Crosby's surviving executor (William Bracebridge, M.P.). Sir Bartholomew Reed's name has been handed down to us as being connected with some of the most

remarkable events of the first two years of the 16th century. He was a man of high distinction and importance in the City, a member of the Worshipful Company of Grocers, and in 1498 he is found serving the office of Sheriff during the mayoralty of John Percival. In the year 1502 Sir Bartholomew was elected to the civic chair, which he filled with the highest credit to himself and benefit to his fellow-citizens, his year of office being one of the most brilliant on record. His inaugural dinner was on a scale of unparalleled magnificence, there being amongst the number present upwards of a hundred persons "of great estate." With respect to the place at which the sumptuous feast was given, Grafton relates that in the year of his mayoralty he gave a wonderful feast in Goldsmiths' Hall.

Stow dismisses the story as an altogether impossible fable, and says it was incredible and altogether impossible that Lord Mayor Reed kept the feast there, as "some have fabled," adding that, considering the number of guests, the number of dishes of meats prepared and served, and the amount of floor space so plentifully supplied "with fruitfull trees, beastes of venery, and other circumstances of that pretended feast, well-weighed, Westminster Hall would hardly have sufficed."

Whether or not Stow was just in his insinuation, that Goldsmiths' Hall contained no apartment spacious enough for the accommodation of such a company, the writer is unable to say, but considering that Sir Bartholomew purchased Crosby Place in order that he might have a home befitting the splendour which he had determined should signalize his mayoralty, it is almost certain that this magnificent feast was kept in London's largest house—Crosby Place in Bishopsgate.

It was here too that he right royally entertained a most distinguished guest, the Princess Katharine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, a few days before her marriage to the young Prince Arthur, the son of Henry VII.; she who was afterwards the ill-fated wife of his brother Henry VIII., whose divorce played so important a part in preparing the way for the Reformation. It would appear that Sir Bartholomew Reed had committed some offence, for I find in Gairdner's "Letters and Papers illustrative of the reigns of Richard III. and Henry VII.,"

that pardons were granted to 110 persons on June 16th, 1502, and among them was the name of Alderman Bartholomew Reed. Later, Maximilian, Emperor of Germany, sent to England an Ambassador with a splendid retinue on a visit of condolence upon the deaths of Henry's consort, Elizabeth of York, and her son, Prince Arthur, which had occurred within a few months of each other in the years 1502-3.

"1503. Thys yere the Qwene Elzabethe dyde at the Towre and burryd at Westmyster. Item this yere a gret inbassetor came from the Kyng of Romans."—*Monumenta Francescana*, vol. 2.

The Embassy was triumphantly received into London and lodged at Crosby Place as the honoured guests of Bartholomew Reed, Lord Mayor. On this occasion the Embassy included Lord Casimir and the Marquis of Bradenbury. It was sent not only to offer comfort to the King, but for the renewal of the old league of amity between the two countries and, perhaps more important still, with the object of persuading the King to marry the Emperor's daughter, the Lady Margaret, Duchess Dowager of Savoy, which latter design signally failed.

Sir Bartholomew's residence at Crosby Place was a period of extraordinary interest in the history of London, both from the social improvement it witnessed, and from the oppressions to which the citizens were subjected at the hands of Henry VII. This monarch was a past master of the art of making money, and every "favour bestowed" had to be purchased at a high price. Charters and privileges were granted by him pretty freely, but only as they served his own profit. In 1505 a confirmation of their rights and privileges cost the citizens no less a sum than 5,000 marks. He accumulated considerable wealth by all the artifices and oppressions imaginable, but the most iniquitous of all was the imprisonment of Lord Mayors William Capel and Thomas Knesworth, as well as the latter's two Sheriffs, against whom no accusation could be supported. These were all thrown into prison and detained there without trial until they offered large sums of money for their deliverance. One Christopher Hawis, Mercer and Alderman, was so harassed by these proceedings that he died of a broken heart. Much of the money that Henry so gained was given in an ostentatious fashion to various charities, and to the endowment of religious

schools, and on one occasion in the year 1507 he discharged all prisoners in London whose debts did not exceed £2.

After spending a princely fortune during a life marked by hospitality and beneficence, Sir Bartholomew Reed made provision for the continuance of his bounty by the bequest of large estates to the Goldsmiths' Company for charitable purposes. He died in 1505, and was buried in the cloisters of the Charterhouse. Lady Elizabeth Reed, his widow, who was also a benefactress to the Goldsmiths' Company, continued to live at Crosby Place until the 9th May, 1507, on which date William Fermer and his wife, Johanna, the representatives of the executors of Sir John Crosby's will, released Lady Elizabeth Reed, so that the Crosby executors again secured an interest in the lease of Crosby Place. In the Company's books there are accounts of their obits, and the estates left to maintain them. The following extracts have reference to Sir Bartholomew and Lady Reed:—

“ 1511, Oct. 30.—Keeping the obit of Sir Bartholomew Rede, Knight: Present—Alderman Exmewe, master, the four wardens, and 37 others.”

“ 1512, May 8.—Lady Rede offered certain lands to the value of £12 10s. 9d. per annum, that the Company should be charged, yearly, for ever, with 10 marks for the finding of a priest, in St. John Zachary's church; the said priest always to be nominated by the fellowship.”

“ 1512, Oct. 1.—Lady Rede gave 250 marks to buy 100 quarters of coals to be given to poor folks, and further to expend 10s. yearly to keep a lamp burning in St. John Zachary church, to pay 12 almsmen, being present at the dirge and mass at Sir Bartholomew's obite 1s. each, to the two renter wardens for their attendance 5s. each, to the beadle 1s., and weekly, to two poor goldsmiths' widows 'whilst such be of good disposicion and honeste credit 8d.' ”

SIR JOHN REST

I have already shown that in 1507, after the death of Sir Bartholomew Reed, his widow, Lady Elizabeth, surrendered Crosby Place to the executors under Sir John Crosby's will. Between that date and 1516 we have no evidence to show who occupied the mansion, although it is believed that Sir John Rest purchased the lease from the said executors about the year 1508. I find, however, that in 1516 Alderman Sir John Rest spent his mayoralty there, giving due splendour to his year of office, but whether he

had been long resident there I am unable to say. Sir John was the son of William Rest, of Peterborough, and was admitted to be one of the most eminent citizens of his time. He was a member of the Company of Grocers, served the office of Sheriff in the year 1511, and upon being raised to the civic chair he received the honour of knighthood from Henry VIII. The events of Sir John Rest's occupancy were more than usually interesting. On reaching the civic chair it is said that he treated the citizens of London to one of the finest Lord Mayor's pageants ever given. It is said that the "show" at that time consisted of "four giants, one unicorn, one dromedary, one luce [full grown pike], one camel, one ass, one dragon, six hobby horses, and sixteen naked boys"; but by far the most remarkable event of Sir John Rest's mayoralty was that which has given the name of "Evil May Day" to the celebration of one of these olden time harmless festivals of the year.

May Day in London, according to ancient custom, was a day of great rejoicing, and was kept as a holiday throughout the City, with morris dances (said to be of Moorish origin) and May poles. A pole was annually erected on May day morning in St. Andrew's Church, Leadenhall Street, at that time called Cornhill, and because this great shaft or May pole was set up here, the church was distinguished from all others dedicated to the same Saint by the name St. Andrew Undershaft. In these days the custom was observed by the noble as well as the poor, and even the Lord Mayor, accompanied by the Sheriffs and Aldermen, after he had led out the citizens, condescended to mingle with the crowd and to share in their rejoicings.

For some time during the reign of Henry VIII. a feeling of great jealousy had been gradually aroused among the London citizens against everybody who was not a Freeman of the City,—"strangers" as they were then called—because such numbers of them were permitted to dispose of their wares within the walls of the City, and to follow their several trades and handicrafts "to the great hindrance and impoverishing of the King's liege people." It is stated that not only could the English artificers scarcely earn a living because of the multitude of "strangers" about London, but that the aliens insolently boasted that they were so much in favour with

the King and his Council, that they could safely ignore the rulers of the City; and worst of all, they mocked and oppressed the Englishmen. This was the beginning of the bad feeling which grew into bitter rancour, accentuated by the King's neglect to take any notice of the grievance, and the arrogant behaviour of the alien "strangers." The citizens were violently excited by an Easter Spital sermon on the subject, preached by Dr. Bell, and the quarrel broke into open riot on the 28th April, 1517.

There is a ballad on the subject reprinted by the Percy Society in a collection of songs and ballads relating to the London apprentices and trades, and in the introduction the story is detailed. During a state of excitement, the 'prentices and others picked quarrels with the "strangers" as they passed along, some they struck and others they threw to the ground, for which offence several of the 'prentices were sent to prison. "Then suddenly," says Stow, "rose a secret rumour, and no man could tell how it began, that on May day next the City would slay all the aliens; insomuch that divers strangers fled out of the City." The rumour reached the ears of the King on the eve of May day, and the attention of Sir John Rest was called to the matter. He immediately summoned a Common Hall "to adopt such measures as should appear necessary for the preservation of peace." The Guildhall was in less than an hour crowded by Aldermen and Common Councilmen, all filled with anxiety as to the rumours that were abroad. The famous Sir Thomas More, the next tenant of Crosby Place, took an active part in the proceedings, which resulted in an order, delivered by each Alderman personally to his Ward, that every householder should keep his house shut from nine that night (May-day eve) until nine o'clock on the following May-day morn. The proclamation was read, and but for the unfortunate interference of an imprudent Alderman, Sir John Mundy, all might have gone well; but the over-zealous Alderman, finding two youngsters playing in Cheapside, commanded them to go within doors. This they insolently declined to do. The injudicious Alderman thereupon threatened to send them to the Compter, which error proved to be the signal for riot. In response to the cry "'Prentices! 'Prentices! Clubs! Clubs!" a boisterous crowd soon collected, and a general riot began in earnest. The mob next assailed Newgate releasing two prisoners, and then on to the

Compter, setting all the prisoners loose, afterwards plundering the building. Having added considerably to their ranks, they rushed on to Leadenhall Street, where resided many "strangers," who quickly transported themselves and their families to Islington, Hackney, and other villages; so, finding themselves balked, the mob pillaged every house in "Blanchappleton," in the vicinity of Mark Lane, where foreign traders or artizans, and non-freemen, were known to live. Troops were called out and aided the Lord Mayor in securing some 400 of the most violent. Some were sent to the Tower, while several of them were confined at Crosby Place until their removal to Lambeth Palace. Ten gallows were erected in different parts of the City—Bishopsgate, Gracechurch Street, Leadenhall Street, and in other places—with the object of terrorising the mob, and on May 4th, the prisoners were tried at the Guildhall and sentenced. On May 7th, thirteen men were brought to the place of execution, and one, John Lincoln, a stockbroker, who had openly preached against the "strangers," was the first to suffer the penalty in Cheapside, followed by twelve others in different parts of the City; and others would have shared the same fate had not a respite arrived for them. Some 400 of them were taken to Westminster, where they were formally pardoned by the King, Cardinal Wolsey afterwards exhorting them to loyalty and obedience. This riot put an end to the custom of erecting the Maypole in Cornhill and Gracechurch, as had always been done in previous years.

Sir John Rest's year of office expired in the month of December, 1517, and for the next six years I can find nothing to connect him with the history of Crosby Place, although it is possible he continued to reside there until 1519, in the summer of which year there is reason to believe he let the mansion to Sir Thomas More, who, on the 1st June, 1523, purchased from Sir John Rest's executors the leasehold of Crosby Place, with an unexpired term of 42 years. From this fact we may gather that Sir John Rest died early in 1523.

CHAPTER V

SIR THOMAS MORE, 1519-1524

IF, of the two tenants who most strongly link Crosby Place to English history, one was notorious for his crimes, the other more than atones by the loftiness of his aims and the blamelessness of his life. For whereas the deeds of the criminal set up but a short-lived evil, the thought, work, and example of "the great good man" remain impressed upon much that is best in English life to this day. The same floor that bore the weight of a man warped in mind and body, resolving within himself how best to murder two innocent children, was the pacing ground of a thinker, occupied with such problems as the reform of the Universities, the revival of Greek, the freeing of Christianity from its load of mediæval scholastic rubbish, the foundation of a system of public schools for the masses, and the mapping out a wise and just policy for England in the conduct of great affairs. There is reason to believe that for four and a half years, between 1519 and 1524, Crosby Place was privileged to house Sir Thomas More, thereby connecting itself with the first flowing of the New learning into England—with the Renaissance—throes of ideas that lighten every life among us to-day.

The fact that the years More spent at Crosby Place were among the least eventful, and consequently the least known years of his life, renders it unnecessary to give much more than a short sketch of his career, though, since many writers on London have persistently striven to connect the house with the composition of the "Utopia" and with the visits and writings of More's great friend and fellow-worker Erasmus, I shall be a little fuller in attempting to correct the errors upon those points.



SIR THOMAS MORE.

(From an engraving by H. T. Ryall, after Holbein)

The future Lord Chancellor was the son of Sir John More, a justice of Common Pleas in 1517, and a judge of the King's Bench in 1520. He was born in Milk Street, Cheapside, about the year 1478. All traces of Milk Street as More knew it were destroyed in the Great Fire nearly a couple of centuries later. He was educated at a school of considerable reputation for its teaching—St. Anthony's Free School, belonging to the Hospital of St. Anthony, which stood on the site at present occupied by the Consolidated Bank, No. 52, Threadneedle Street. There he remained until he was thirteen years of age, when he entered the household of one of the greatest masters of public affairs of his time, Archbishop and the Chancellor Morton—the friend of Edward IV., the enemy of Richard III., the man to whom Henry VII, in great measure owed his crown. Morton soon discovered that the boy possessed very unusual intellectual powers, frequently prophesying that "this child here waiting at table, whoever shall live to see it, will prove a marvellous man."

More was sent in 1492 to Canterbury Hall—afterward Christ Church—Oxford, but his father, a severely practical and legal-minded man, became alarmed at the tone of his letters, seeing but little prospect of legal advancement in the humanist studies into which his son was plunging, and recalled him towards the end of 1493. He was then entered as a law student at New Inn, Wych Street, where he remained until his removal to Lincoln's Inn in 1496. Three years later a friendship sprang up between Erasmus and More, although one of Erasmus' epistles would make this meeting take place in 1497. He then shut himself up in Charterhouse for four years of study, prayer, and meditation, wishing indeed to devote himself formally to religion, but being restrained by the wishes of his father. He was called to the Bar, and in 1504 was returned to Parliament. At this time, even as a young man, he fought for the rights of the people, alone raising his voice in Parliament against one of the worst of Henry the Seventh's schemes for extortion, arguing to such good purpose as to cause a sad shrinkage in the sum of £113,000 which Henry sought to obtain. For this feat he was forced to withdraw from public life until Henry's death, when, in 1510, he became Under-Sheriff of the City of London, then a judicial office.

Meanwhile, he married in 1505, and went to live in Bucklersbury

in order to be near his father. In 1508 he visited Louvain and Paris. His wife died in 1511, and a month later he married a second time—a widow, named Alice Middleton, and in the same year he became a Bencher. It is believed that he left Bucklersbury in 1514, and went to reside at Chelsea. About this time trouble arose between the London merchants and the foreign traders of the Steelyard, which formerly stood on the site of the present Cannon Street Station, and in May, 1515, he was sent by Henry VIII. as ambassador to secure the renewal of a treaty of alliance with the Archduke of Austria, and to ensure protection of English commercial interests. He returned early in the following year (1516) when he wrote to Erasmus, "When I returned from my embassy of Flanders, the King would have granted me a yearly pension."

While on this mission he spent his time chiefly at Bruges and Antwerp, and it was in the latter city that he found time to sketch his imaginary island of "Utopia." As already stated he took an active part in suppressing the "Evil May Day" riot of 1517, caused by the sudden outbreak of popular fury against all who were not free-men of the City. Shortly afterwards he was appointed by the City to examine into the causes of the disturbance. On 16th August, 1517, he was sent to Calais as a member of a fresh embassy in the interest of London merchants upon disputes arising out of incidents in time of war, and returned home in November. About this time he was holding the comparatively unimportant post of Under-Sheriff, or judge of the Poultry Compter. The date at which Sir Thomas More took up his residence at Crosby Place has ever been a matter of conjecture to all historians. One writer has assured us that it was in 1513, while others, with equal certainty, quote 1515, 1516 and 1517 respectively as the date of his leasing Crosby Place. Just at the moment of going to press, however, I find myself indebted to Mr. Philip Norman, F.S.A., who generously comes to my assistance, and informs me that he has been assured by the most reliable authority—the holder of the original deed—that Sir Thomas More purchased the lease from the executors of Sir John Rest on 1st June, 1523, for which he paid the sum of £150. This, then, might lead one to believe that he did not enter Crosby Place until that date, but when it is pointed out that in 1518 Sir Thomas More accepted the important office of Privy Councillor and examiner of

petitions presented to the King on his progresses through the country, and as his advancement had been very rapid, and the new dignity required the holder to be in constant personal relations with the King, who then kept his Court close by at Baynard's Castle, it is very probable that he found it necessary to leave Chelsea for some larger and more convenient mansion. He joined the court, after long withstanding the King's solicitations, in 1518, and I am inclined to fix the summer of 1519 as the date of his taking Crosby Place as a tenant, notwithstanding the fact that it is shown he did not purchase the lease until four years later. That he sold the lease to Bonvisi seven months afterwards (20th January, 1524), somewhat supports my contention that he was already occupying the house when he purchased it, for it is very unlikely he would engage in buying so large a mansion merely to hold the lease, or even with the view of occupying it for the short period of seven months, at a time when he was already building a house at Chelsea. It is quite reasonable to assume that after the death of Sir John Rest, the mansion, then tenanted by More, was offered for sale, and that Sir Thomas purchased it in order to secure a peaceful tenancy until the completion of his Chelsea house, just as one might do to-day under similar circumstances. He would not have wanted so large a house before 1519, and he was not the man to take such a place without evident need, merely for show. It is believed that he still retained his house at Chelsea, as his means were now much improved, for he had been earning some £400 a year (equal to £5,000 at this day) in the practice of his legal profession, besides which he had accepted a pension of £100 a year for life.

From several sources an accurate picture can be presented of the sort of life that now filled Crosby Place. More's portrait was drawn for us by the liveliest pen then at work in Europe. Erasmus called him a second Democritus, always full of gaiety, excelling in witty repartees, and conversing with ease with men in every rank of life, and when comparing More's House to the "Academy of Plato," he gives an excellent picture of the atmosphere which surrounded the author of "Utopia." He says:—

"That while in the 'Academy of Plato,' the discussions turned
"upon geometry, his house is a venerable school of Christian religion.
"All its inhabitants, male and female, applied their leisure to

“ liberal studies and profitable reading, although piety was their chief care. No wrangling, no idle word was heard in it, the house governed by gentleness and amiable manners, every one did his duty with alacrity and not without a temperate cheerfulness.”

The letter of Erasmus No. 446, which was written to give Ulrici von Hutten some idea of the great Englishman, who had admired his “*Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*,” is too long to quote in a work which pretends to give only a brief history of Crosby Place, but it is worth reading.

Dealing with his relations with Henry, Erasmus says :—

“ The King was bent on surrounding himself with the most capable men in his dominions. He insisted that More should make one of them, and now he values him so highly, both as a companion and as a Privy Councillor, that he will hardly let him out of his sight.”

While his son-in-law Roper, speaking to the same purpose, says of him :—

“ When he [Henry VIII.] had done his own devotions, to send for him [More] into his private room to sit, and confer with him, and other whiles would he in the night have him up into the leads, there to consider with him the diversities, courses and motions of the stars, and because he was of a pleasant disposition it pleased the King and Queen . . . at the time of their supper for their pleasure commonly to call him, to be merry with them. When he perceived so much in his talk to delight that he could not once in a month get leave to go home to his wife and children (whose company he most desired), he much misliking this restraint of liberty, began thereupon somewhat to dissemble his nature, and so little by little of his former mirth to disuse himself, that he was of them from thenceforth no more so ordinarily sent for.”

More lived so much longer at Chelsea than at Crosby Place, that his friends, in the sketches they have left us, picture him in that place, but the composition of the man's household and character does not change with the removal of a few miles, and every word that Erasmus wrote of him may be accepted as truly of Crosby Place as of Chelsea. The visits and favours of Henry were certainly as frequent at Crosby Place, and it is probable that during More's residence there, every eminent man in the kingdom trod the boards of the Great Hall, following their King's example. The great Banqueting Hall was on more than one occasion the scene of a great feast given by the Chancellor to Queen Katharine of Aragon—with whom he was very popular as much for his wit as his goodness



THE BANQUETING HALL
during the occupancy of Sir Thomas More, 1520.

(From an engraving by W. S. Wilkinson, after H. J. Hammon)

—and to his most ungrateful monarch. It requires no great stretch of imagination to picture the Chancellor and his Royal guests moving about in this glorious Hall in its pristine state, with the lofty wall covered with rich tapestry, and its exquisite oriel window shedding a profusion of light around the Royal group.

It is less certain that More's own particular friends visited him there. The dates of Erasmus' visits to England, as mostly inferred from the internal evidence of his letters, are between 1498 and 1500, between 1505-6, between 1509-10, in 1514, and finally flying visits in 1515-16. Yet in the letter to Ulrici von Hutten, conjecturally dated 1519, he refers to More as living at Chelsea at a time when, by our chronology, he was at Crosby Place. It is possible, and even likely, that he held both houses concurrently, one as a town residence and the other as a country retreat. But my present point is that, wherever Erasmus wrote his "Praise of Folly," or "Moriæ Encomium" as he called it, playing upon More's name, whether at Bucklersbury or at Chelsea, it was not written at Crosby Place as is generally supposed to be the case; nor, bearing in mind the dates of his visits to England as given above, is there any warrant for supposing he ever crossed the threshold of More's Bishopsgate house.

Of More's other friends, Grocyn, and Colet, the great Dean of St. Paul's, might possibly have visited the house; as they had just opportunity for so doing before their deaths, which both occurred in 1519. Linacre did not die until 1524, so that his connection with Crosby Place may be regarded as much better established.

Of More's own works one may say that if his "Life of Richard III." had only been written at Crosby Place, never was there a book produced in such a fitting environment, but, as a matter of fact, the story of Richard's plotting and Catesby's treachery was written at Bucklersbury in 1513, about six years before Sir Thomas More found himself in possession of the very scene of the events he had depicted. Nor, upon examination, does the popular legend as to the writing of the "Utopia" at Crosby Place fare any better. The Second book of that philosophical romance, which, in order of production, preceded the First book, was written partly on his embassy to Bruges and Antwerp, and partly at Chelsea, after his return towards the close of 1515. The first part, or Introduction, was yet unfin-

ished when Erasmus visited England again in 1516. He encouraged More to press on with the work which, however, he could not wait in England to see finished. Accordingly, the completed MS. was sent after him in October, and the book was first published in quarto form under his editorship, by Thierry Martins, at Louvain, in December, 1516, just three years before Sir Thomas More leased Crosby Place. Moreover, as early as February, 1517, Erasmus is known to have advised a correspondent to send for "Utopia" if he had not yet read it; and again, he speaks of a Burgomaster at Antwerp, who was so pleased with the book that he knew it all by heart. This, then, I regret to say, robs Crosby Place of one of its most cherished traditions; but my purpose is to state fact—not to perpetuate a pleasing fiction.

What, however, is quite possible, is that More saw through the press, at Crosby Place, a later edition of "Utopia," revised by himself, and with the addition of letters of Erasmus to Froben, and of Bude to Lupset, printed by Froben, who added the Epigrams of More and Erasmus. Here, too, he may have written his "Epigrammata," some severe criticism on Germain de Brixius, in reply to his "Chordigera." De Brixius retaliated in a pamphlet entitled "Anti Morus," and Sir Thomas More wrote a sharp reply, only seven copies of which were distributed, because Erasmus deprecated the publication. The year following his being made Speaker to the House of Commons in 1523, Sir Thomas More sold the remaining term of 41 years' interest in the lease of the "great tenement called Crosbie's Place" to his intimate and valued friend Antonio Bonvisi. He had previously, probably in 1520, bought a piece of land in Chelsea, on which he "made for himself a large garden stretching to the Thames" and "built on it a house sufficient for his family," which was, in the year 1524, ready for his occupancy. Not a vestige of it now remains, but it stood at the north end of what is now Beaufort Row. There are two purchases by More recorded in the "Feet of Fines" for Middlesex; one, of a messuage and seven and a-half acres in Chelsea for £20, the other of twenty-seven acres of land in Chelsea for £30. These purchases were made in 1524.

The remainder of Sir Thomas More's career must not detain us long. In 1519 he resigned his favourite office of Under-Sheriff of

the City; in 1520 he was with the King at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, was knighted in 1521, made Sub-treasurer to his Majesty, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in 1525, High Chancellor on Wolsey's fall in 1529, resigned this office in 1531, because he would not forward Henry's plans for placing himself, instead of the Pope, in the position of Spiritual Lord of the realm, and fell a victim to the tyrant's axe in 1535, for his inflexible independence in the matter of the King's divorce from Katharine of Aragon. The story of how light-heartedly he went to death for a principle, is one of our most oft-told tales. The tenant of Crosby Place at this time was his "entire friend, Antonio Bonvisi," who, when More was deprived of every little comfort, brought him clothes and food, and who, on the last morning, brought him his "best apparel;" but the Lieutenant of the Tower induced him to take it off again, that it might not become the property of the executioner. On being led to the block, the scaffold was so weak that it was ready to fall, whereupon he merrily said, "I pray you, Master Lieutenant, see me safe up, and for my coming down let me shift for myself." After a prayer, he turned to his executioner with a cheerful countenance, and said, "Pluck up thy spirits, man, and be not afraid to do thine office; my neck is very short; take heed, therefore, thou strike not awry for saving of thine honesty." But, perhaps, the most thorough insight to the spirit of the man is obtained by that parting letter to his beloved daughter, Margaret, who had married William Roper, to whom we owe the details. Outward jester and inward ascetic, More sent her the hair shirt which he had worn secretly all his life, and a letter, "written with a coal," for he had no other material, saying:—"I cumber you, good Margaret, much; but I should be sorry if it [the day of his execution] should be any longer than to-morrow. For to-morrow is St. Thomas' even, and the octave of St. Peter, and, therefore, to-morrow long I to go to God—that were a day very meet and convenient for me."

CHAPTER VI

ANTONIO BONVISI, BENEDICT BONVISI, WILLIAM ROPEE, WILLIAM
 RASTELL, PETER CROWLE, GERMAIN CIOILL, RICHARD
 HEYWOOD AND JOHN WEBB
 1524-1566

THE Antonio Bonvisi to whom, on the 20th January, 1524, Sir Thomas More sold his remaining term of 41 years' interest in Crosby Place for £200 which he had "lately bought for certain years," was a merchant of Lucca, who came to England 19 years before the above date, the King granting to him letters patent making him a freeman of the City in November, 1510. He came of a noble Italian family, and therefore he must have been connected with many distinguished and influential men in Italy. He was also an intimate friend of the brothers Sir John and Sir Thomas Gresham, who lived immediately opposite him in Bishopsgate Street; but Bonvisi far excelled them both in personal endowments, and was even more fortunate in business enterprise. Bonvisi lived at Crosby Place for some twelve years in peace and comfort, and without any special incident happening worthy of mention.

The feeling against monastic institutions was largely increased by the Lollard movement, and it became clear that any reform in the Church must begin with the monasteries. In 1523 Wolsey had already obtained bulls from the Pope authorising the suppression of 40 of the smaller houses, and the application of their revenues to educational purposes, notably to his colleges at Oxford and Ipswich. This example was eagerly followed by Henry VIII., and as their weakness and their wealth made them a tempting object of attack, he instituted a visitation of inquiry, which was quickly followed in

1536 by an Act of Parliament authorising the suppression of all the smaller monasteries whose incomes were below £200 a year. St. Helen's Priory was not affected by this statute, as the value of this Priory was put at £314 2s. 6d. and £376 6s. by Dugdale and Speed respectively, but it gave Bonvisi alarm, for he was convinced that the larger monasteries would be suppressed at a later date. He had, on the 28th March, 1538, obtained a lease from Mary Rollesley, Prioress of St. Helen's, for a period of 71 years, and the confirmation of the former lease granted to Sir John Crosby, which would expire in 1565. This was tantamount to a fresh lease of 99 years, at £11 6s. 8d. On the 30th October, 1538, he furthermore obtained from the Prioress of St. Helen's a lease of a tenement or chamber situate in the alley leading from the south door of St. Helen's Church to St. Mary Axe, which tenement is described as adjoining the "larder house" and "cole house" of the said Bonvisi, and as being formerly in the possession of one Julian Fraunces. This lease was for 80 years, at an annual rent of 10s. This was the last act of the Prioress and Convent, for within one month afterwards an event happened which deprived them of the power of entering into any similar contract. All religious houses were suppressed throughout the realm in accordance with a statute 31, Henry VIII., cap. XIII., sect. 2, which provided that "The King shall have, hold, possess and enjoy to him, his heirs and successors for ever, all monasteries, abbaties, priories, nunneries, colleges, hospitals, houses of friars, and other religious and ecclesiastical houses and places . . . and shall have, hold, possess and enjoy all the sites, circuits, precincts, manors, lands, etc."

The "Priory of St. Eleyns" was one of the number "voluntarily" surrendered by Dame Mary Rollesley to the Crown in 1538, and with it went the freehold of Crosby Place, notwithstanding that the leasehold was held by Bonvisi. "Voluntarily" was a sample of Henry's grim humour. It would appear, however, that even in those days of wholesale spoliation and robbery the leases granted by the dissolved monasteries were respected, and, apart from the fact that Henry favoured the foreign merchants for the sake of the magnificent silks, velvets, tissues of gold, jewels and other luxuries given "for the pleasure of us and of our dearest wyeff the Quene" [Katharine of Aragon], and that the statute referred to provided for

the rights of all parties holding under the different dissolved houses, it was not his policy to alienate the nobility and gentry from the new order of things which he was attempting to establish, much less to offend a member of the famous Bonvisi family, and a friend of Sir Thomas Gresham. Consequently Antonio Bonvisi was confirmed in his possession, by an express grant from the King on the 20th August, 1542, as follows,

“ Know you that we, of our special grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, give and grant unto the said Anthony Bonvisi, the reversion and reversions of the said messuage and tenement, with all the appurtenances, commonly called Crosby Place ”

and on the 9th of September, 1542, Bonvisi obtained from Sir Edward Northe, Kt., Treasurer of the Revenues, an “ Acquittance ” for the purchase money paid by him (£207 18s. 4d.) “ due to the use of the King’s Majesty, for the gift, grant, clear purchase of the house and site of the late priory of Black fryars in Chelmsford ” . . . and “ for one tenement or messuage, called Crosbow’s Place, lying and being in the parish of St. Ellen’s in London, and for divers other houses, messuages, etc. in the parish of St. Ellen, and the parish of St. Mary Axe, late parcel of the possession of the said late Priory of St. Ellen’s.” Bonvisi now, instead of being a leaseholder, has secured the freehold of this enormous estate for the small sum of £207 18s. 4d. The grant, which was witnessed by the King at Westminster, on the 9th December, 1542, provided that the estate be held in chief by the service of a fortieth part of one Knight’s fee, and the payment of a yearly rent of £1 3s. 8d., payable yearly, by the name of tithe.

In February, 1547, Bonvisi entailed Crosby Place and his other possessions on Peter Crowle, with remainder, in failure of heirs by the said Peter, to Benedict Bonvisi and Anthony Roper, next in reversion after Peter Crowle, Richard Heywood and John Webb, and Germain Cioll, second in succession after Crowle; the third one being John Ryther, Cofferer of the King’s Majesty’s household. Two months later, 1st April, 1547, almost immediately after the death of Henry VIII., Bonvisi granted a 90 years’ lease of the house, at the yearly rental of £11 14s. 8d., to William Rastell, puisne judge of the Queen’s Bench, and to William Roper, the biographer of Sir Thomas More, the former being the nephew and

the latter the son-in-law of More; and then on the 22nd June, 1547, Bonvisi obtained a license enabling him, in consideration of a fine, to give or grant to Richard Heywood and John Webb "all that large messuage called Crosbye's Place." The license runs:—

"EDWARD the Sixth by the grace of God King of England France and Ireland Defender of the faith and on earth 'the supreme head of the Church of England and Ireland TO ALL TO WHOM these present letters shall come GREETING Know that we of our special grace and for seventy eight shillings and eight pence paid to us in our office of the Hanaper have granted and given licence and by these present letters Grant and give licence for ourselves and our heirs as far as in our power to our beloved Antony Bonvix merchant of Lucca otherwise called Antony Bonvix of London Merchant otherwise called Antony Bonvise that he both by a fine to be levied in our Court before our Justice of the Bench at Westminster and otherwise May give and grant to Richard Heywode of London gentleman and John Webbe gentleman All that his large messuage or tenement now commonly called Crosbies Place with the houses chambers cellars and gardens adjacent belonging to the same tenement and its other appurtenances late in the tenure of Cataneus Penellus [Cataneo Pinello] merchant of Genoa and afterwards in the tenure or occupation of John Crosbye Which and all of which the same John Crosbye had before by the lease of Alice Woodhowse formerly prioress of the late Priory house or church of Saint Helen below Bysshoppesgate in the city of London lately dissolved and the convent of the same Situate and lying in Bysshoppesgate Strete in the parish of Saint Helen aforesaid below the said city of London together with a certain lane in the same parish which extends in length from the eastern gate of the said tenement to the corner or southern end of a certain small lane on the north turning into a close late belonging to the said Priory And also his nine messuages situate and lying in the said parish of which six messuages are situate and lying along the Royal street called Bysshoppesgate Strete aforesaid in length between the front of the said tenement and the front of the tower there belonging to the said church And a certain messuage of the said nine messuages which Katherine Catesbye widow once held is situated below the gate under the said tower as also on the said Royal street called Bysshoppesgate Strete and six messuages annexed as aforesaid together with a certain unoccupied plot of ground situate and lying in the aforesaid parish directly and lineally extending in length towards the east by the said messuage which the said Katherine Catesbye once held on the outer part of the 'plate' or 'post' of the said tower abutting on the north of the said six messuages by the said Royal street to the cemetery there fifty-eight feet and a-half standard measure and thence extending in breadth towards the south directly to a certain tenement there formerly in the tenure of Robert Smyth And two messuages of the said nine

messuages adjoin and are situate below the close of the said late Priory of which one was formerly in the tenure or occupation of the said John Crosbye of the lease of the said Alice Woodhowse late prioress of the said late Priory and another messuage of those two messuages was once in the tenure of the said Robert Smyth AND ALSO all that tenement or chamber with all cellars upper chambers and other appurtenances situate and being in a certain alley below the close of the said late Priory constructed and built over the 'Larderhowse' and the 'Colehowse' of the said tenement called Crosbyes Place once in the tenure of Juliana Francys AND ALL and singular rents reversions and other annual profits from certain leases and grants from the said messuages lands tenements and other premises or from any portion taken or reserved from the same which are held of us in chief TO HAVE and to hold to the same Richard Heywode and John Webbe and their heirs for ever to the use and behoof of the said Antony Bonvix and his assigns for the term of the life of the said Antony free from any impeachment of waste And after the death of the said Antony to the use and behoof of Peter Crowle son of Andrew Crowle deceased and the heirs of the body of the said Peter Crowle lawfully begotten And in default of heirs of the body of the said Peter Crowle lawfully begotten to the use and behoof of Antony Roper son of William Roper Esquire and the heirs of the body of the said Antony Roper lawfully begotten And in default of heirs of the body of the said Antony Roper lawfully begotten to the use and behoof of German Cioll and the heirs of the body of the said German lawfully begotten And in default of heirs of the body of the said German lawfully begotten to the use and behoof of John Ryther Esquire Cofferer of Our Household and the heirs of the said John Ryther Of us and of our heirs for the services thence due and customary for ever And we give and grant special licence to the said Richard Heywode and John Webbe that they may receive from the said Antony Bonvix all and singular the said messuages tenements rents reversions and other premises with their appurtenances and hold them to themselves and their heirs to the uses aforesaid Of us and our heirs aforesaid for the services aforesaid according to the meaning of these present letters BEING UNWILLING that the said Antony Bonvix or his heirs or the said Richard Heywode and John Webbe or their heirs should on account of the aforesaid be hindered vexed or in any way molested IN WITNESS of which thing we have caused these our letters patent to be made WITNESS ourself at Westminster the twenty-second day of June in the first year of our reign" [*i.e.*, 1547].

After making his will on 1st July, Bonvisi conveyed the freehold to Heywood and Webb on 4th July, 1547. Roper and Rastell, still holding the lease for 90 years, entered into an agreement on 2nd August to lease the house to Germain Cioll and Benedict Bonvisi. About this time (1548) an order was issued that the

practice of ancient superstitions should be abolished, and that discipline and worship should be brought somewhat nearer the practice of the reformed character, and that all images be removed from churches. A commission by Act of Council was granted to the Primate to examine and search after all Anabaptists, heretics, or contemnners of the Book of Common Prayer. In the putting into force of this Act, all who adhered to the Catholic forms of religious worship were persecuted. London tradesmen and others were brought before the Commissioners, and those who adjured their opinions were released, but others who could not be prevailed upon to do so suffered the penalty. The fact that several executions took place, drove to the Continent several persons who persisted in the Catholic form of worship, and among them were Antonio Bonvisi, Benedict Bonvisi, William Rastell, William Roper, Peter Crowle, and Germain Cioll, all staunch Catholics. Benedict Bonvisi left England on the 2nd of April, 1548, Antonio Bonvisi on the 25th September, 1549, William Rastell on the 21st December, 1549, and Germain Cioll and the others on the 20th October, 1550. An inquisition, taken on the 8th May, 1553, recites that Bonvisi, with his family, as well as the others mentioned, "against his allegiance went, fled, withdrew themselves, and departed out of England into the parts beyond the sea without licence, and against the force, form, and effect of a statute and certain proclamation in that behalf made, published and proclaimed," and went to reside at Louvain, and by this, and in pursuance with the effect of the above mentioned statute and inquisition, their estates and effects became forfeited to the Crown, and were on the 18th June, 1553, granted to Thomas Lord Darcy, of Chule, who occupied the mansion until May in the following year.

As soon as it was known that Edward VI. was dead, Bonvisi and his companions returned to London, and Queen Mary having repealed those laws enacted to the prejudice of the Church of Rome "for divers and sundry good and reasonable causes and considerations," they were restored to the possession of their former estates, Rastell subsequently becoming a judge in the Queen's Bench. No doubt, it was under compulsion on the accession of Mary—for the persecution had now changed sides—that Lord Darcy on the 11th of May, 1554, restored to Antonio Bonvisi, Benedict Bonvisi,

Germain Cioll and others, their interests in Crosby Place, which the former had only occupied for a few months; and any penalties to which the above Antonio, Benedict and Germain were liable for leaving the country without licence, were pardoned by, or annulled on the accession of Queen Mary. The deed of Grant by Lord Darcy, which is a most interesting document, is as follows:—

“ TO ALL CRISTEN PEPE to whom this present writing shall come Syr Thoms Darcy knight of the honorable order of the garter / Lord Darcy of Chule sendithe greting / WHERE by a certen inquisition indentye taken at the Guyldhall in the Cyte of London / the eight day of Maye in the seventhe yere of the reigne of the late sovrayne lord King Edward the sixth before Syr Roger Cholmeley knyht and other / it was found by the othe of certen persons namyd in the said Inquisition that Antony Bonvise the five and twenty day of September in the third yere of the reigne of the said late sovrayne lord / was possessyd as of his own goodes then being in a certen capitall mesuage and tenement callyd Crosbys Place sett in the strete callyd Bysshops-gate Strete in London aforesaid of and in dyvers goods catalle implements and utyensylls of housys syeysde [seized] in the said Inquisition / And that the said Antony Bonvise so being thereof possessyd the said five and twenty day of September in the said third yere of the reigne of the said late sovrayne lord / from the said cyte of London wth / all his famely agaynst his allegiance to the said late sovrayne lord Deue / fledd withdrewe hymselfe wut [without] and depted [departed] out of England unto the places of beyond the sea without lycens [license] of the said sovrayne lord thereof had or opteyned agaynst the forme of a statute in suche case made and provided and agaynst the force forme and effect of a certen pelamason [proclamation] in that behalf by the said late sovrayne lord by the advise of his counsell made publisshed and pclaymed [proclaimed] / And that the said Antony Bonvise long before the said deptyng [departing] was seysyd in his demesne as of fee / of and in the said capitall mesuage and tent callyd Crosbys Place / and of and in nyne tents [tenements] or rentarges [rent charges] to the said mesuage and tent pteynyng and belonging / sett in the said Strete callyd Bysshops-gate Strete / And that the said Antony so being therof seysyd I by this indenture bearing date the first day of Aprell in the first yere of the reigne of the said late sovrayne lord dyd betake and demyse the said mesuage and tent and other the prmises wth their apprtennys / to Willm Roop. [Roper] esquier and Willm Rastell gentleman To have to them their executors and assnyes for the terme of fourscore and ten yeres / And that the said Willm Roop and Willm Rastell by their indenture bearing date the second day of August in the said first yere of the reigne of the said late sovrayne lord Dyd bytake and demyse the said mesuage and tent and other the prmises wth their apprtennys to Benedict Bonvise and

Germyn Ceol Cyoll to have to them their executors and assignes for all the terme above granntyd to the said Willm Roop and Willm Rastell (one yere thereof only excepted) yielding therefor yerely during the said terme to the said Willm Roop and Willm Rastell their executors and assignes eleven pounds sixtene shillings and eight pence. The remaynder of the said mesuage and other the prmsses after the said terme grannted to the said Benedict and Germyn / to one Robert Fford gentleman his executors and assignes for terme of one yere and six mo of the hole terme and demise aforesaid made to the said Willm Roop and Willm Rastell as is aforesaid And that the said Benedict and Germyn so long thereof possessyd / and the said Benedict Bonvise the 2th day of Appl in the second yere of the reigne of the said late sovrayne lord / from the said cyte of London with with all his famely agaynst his allegiance to the said late sovrayne lord Deue / fledd wtdrewe hymselfe wdtut and Depted owt of England aforesaid unto the ples of byyond the sea wout lycens of the said late sovrayne lord thereof had or opteyned / agaynst the forme of the statute and prlamacon aforesaid / And that the said Willm Rastell the xxith day of December in the third yere of the reigne of our said late sovrayne lord from the said cyte of London with all his famely agaynst his allegiance to the said late sovrayne Deue / fledd wdrewe hymselfe and depted out of England aforesaid / unto the ples of beyond the sea / wout lycens of our said late sovrayne lord thereof had or opteyned / agaynst the forme of the statute and prlamacon aforesaid And that the said Germyn Ceol Cyoll the twenty day of October in the fourthe yere of the reigne of the said late sovrayne lord / from the said cyte of London with all his famely agaynst his allegiance to the said late sovrayne lord Deue / fledd wtdrewe hymselfe and depted out of England aforesaid / unto the ples beyond the sea / wout lycens of our said late sovrayne lord thereof had or opteyned agaynst the forme of the statute and prlamacon aforesaid / (as more at large apperethe in the said Inquisition) / And after that our said late sovrayne lord by his letters patents bearing date at Westmr the xvij day of June in the sayd seventhe yere of his reigne / (rembring the effect of the Inquisition aforesaid) Dyd gyve and grannt unto the said Thomas Darcy knyht Lord Darcy myne executors and assignes / all and singler the foresaid goodes catalls implements and utensylls of housys sysyd in the said Inquisition / And also the foresaid capitall mesuage and tent callyd Crosbys Place / and all edific gardens orchards sollers voyde grounds easements comodytes and emoluments whatsoever being within the said mesuage or tent / or pteynng or belonging to the said mesuage and tent / And also the said nyne tents and rentarges [rent charges] with their appurtenances / And all the foresaid terme of yeres of and in the same grannted to the said Benedict and Germyn / And also all the state right tytle and possession of the said late sovrayne lord of and in the same / And also all and singler rents and arrerays of the same and somes of money of in or owt of the said capitall mesuage and tent and other the prmsses / or for them

or any parcel thereof / resnyd to be paid or goyng out / and to our said late sovrayne lord his heyers and successors by any maid deue or to be deue paid challenged or demandyd during the said terme granntyd (as is aforesaid) to the said Benedict and Germyn / And also all and singler the rents revenues pfitts [profits] and emoluments of all and singler the foresaid capitall mesuage tents and other the pmisses from the tyme of the aforesaid Deptyng of the said Benedict and Germyn and of either of them / Untill the date of the said letteres patents comyng growing or by any manr [manner] or means rysen by the hands of the tennts farmers or occupiers of the same / as more at large apperethe by the said letteres patents NOWE KNOW YE that I the said Syr Thomas Darcy knyght Lord Darcy for dyvers and sondrey good and reasonable causes and consideracons me moving / by these presents do gyve and grannt to the said Anthony Bonvise his executors and assignes to his and their owne uses all and singler the foresaid goodes catalles implements and utensills of houses syeisyd in the said Inquiscion and letteres patents and in any of them / or in eyther of them (except the lese and term of yeres aforesaid) AND also I the said Thomas Darcy lord Darcy for dyvers and sondrey good and reasonable causes and consideracons me moving / by these presents Do gyve and grannt to the said Benedict and Germyn their executors and assignes to their owne uses / the foresaid capitall mesuage and tent callyd Crosbys Place and all the foresaid edifics gardens orchards sollers voyde grounds easements comodities and emoluments whatsoever being win the said mesuage or tent / or peteyning or belonging to the same mesuage or tent / And also the foresaid nyne tents or rentarges wt [with] their apprttennees And all the foresaid terme of yeres of and in the same / And also all my state or right tytyle in and of and possession of and in the same / And also all and singler rentes and arrerayes of the same and somes of money of in or out of the said capitall mesuage and tents and other the pmisses / or for them or any pcell thereof resyvyd to be paid or goyng owt / And to our said late sovrayne lord his heyres or successors by any manr / Dewe or to be Dewe payd challenged or demandd During the said terme grannted (as is aforesaid) to the said Benedict and Germyn / And also all and singler the rents revenues and pfitts and emoluments of all and singler the foresaid capitall mesuage and tents and other the pmisses fro the tyme of the foresaid Deptyng out of England of the said Benedict and Germyn and of either of them untill the day of the date of these presents come grown or by any manr of means rysen by the hands of the tennts [tenants] farmers or occupiers of the same / in as large and ample manr as I the said Lord Darcy had or ought to have the pmisses or any pcell thereof by force of the said letteres patents / And further I the said Thomas Darcy lord Darcy by these presents do gyve and grannt to the said Antony Benedict and Germyn their executors and assignes and their owne uses the foresaid letteres patents And I the said Syr Thomas Darcy lord Darcy by these presents / Do covennt and grannt for me my heyres

and executors / to and with the said Antony Bonvisi Benedict Bonvisi and Germyn their executors and assnyes / that all and singler the prmsses at the sealing of these presents / thereby acquitted and discharged of all and singler forms bargaynes sales charges leasses and encumbrances had made done or suffred by me the said Syr Thomas Darcy lord Darcy IN WITNESS whereof I the said Syr Thomas Darcy lord Darcy / have to this present writing sett my seale / Dated the tenth day of Maye in the first yere of the reigne of our sovrayne lady quene Mary by the grace of God quene of England Ffrance and Ireland Defender of the faith.

“(Signed) T. DARCY.”

Soon after regaining his property Bonvisi died, and we find the lease descending to Peter Crowle in June, 1554. From the precautions which were taken to secure the integrity of the successions, it would appear that Bonvisi was actuated by the impression that Crowle was of wild and unsettled habits. In June, 1554, immediately after the property had descended to him, and within a few days of Bonvisi's death, I find him entering into a covenant to lease Crosby Place to Roper, Rastell, Heywood, Webb, of Faversham, Kent, and Germain Cioll, on the 26th June, 1554, and on the 7th March, 1559, he enters into a bond of £1,000, covenanting with Benedict Bonvisi, of Eltham, that he would not, without consent “directly or indirectly bargain, sell, give, or alien by any means, the said great messuage or tenement, called Crosby's Place, and its appurtenances.” Various other arrangements were entered into between the several parties. Benedict Bonvisi and Anthony Roper appear to have died in the meantime, for on the 28th of February, 1560, Peter Crowle assigns that splendid mansion to Germain Cioll, a Spanish merchant, who three years before had been accused of conspiracy and treason, and to whom was granted a free pardon by Queen Elizabeth on the 15th of January, 1558.

In less than a year Germain Cioll leased Crosby Place to his brother John Cioll and to John Fryer or Frier, Doctor of Physic, for the remainder of his lease. This occurred on the 25th of January, 1561:—

“THIS INDENTURE made the fyve and twenty daye of Janyvor In the third yere of the reigne of our sovraiyn lady Elizabeth By the grace o God Quene of England Francke and Ireland defendor of the fayth Betwene Germain Cioll of the cyte of London merchant on the one partye And John Cioll also merchant of London Brother to

the said germain John Ffrier Doctor of phisicke of the other partye WITNESSETH that wher the Right worshipfull Willm Rastell now one of the quenes Majesties Justice of the plees Before herself to be holden And Willm Rooper esquier by the name of Willm Rooper of London esquier and Willm Rastell of London gentilman by their Dede Indentyd bearing date the second daye of August in the first yere of the reigne of our late sovrayne lord king Edward the sixt for dyvers resonable causes and considerasons them sevrally moving dyd demyse and lett to the foresaid Germain Cioll and to one Benedictie Bonvise and to one Robert fforthe deceassyd all that their great mesuage or tenement with there appurtenances in wich Anthony Bonvise merchant of luk^e [Lucca] otherwise called Anthony Bonvix merchant of London otherwise called Anthony Bonvise then dwellyd comenly called Crosbeyes Place and al the howses cellars solers and garden to the said mesuage or tenement belonging and other there appurtenances named set and being in Byshoppegate Streate in the parish of Saint Elene within the said Cytie of London and a certein lane in the said parish wich extendeth in lengthe from the easte gate or dore of the said great mesuage or tenement unto the corner or showth end of a litle north lane tornyng into the close of the late priory of Saint Elene within Byshoppegate Streete aforesaid and also nyne mesuages or tenements with their appurtenances sett lyeing and being within the parish aforesaid and the tenement or chamber cellers solers and other the appurtenances sett leing and being in an alley within the said close of the said late priory buylded and edified upon the larder howse and cole howse of the said mesuage or tenement called Crosbies Place some tyme in the teno^e or occupason of one Julyan Francys and all and singuler the rents revenues and other annell proffitts reserved upon whatsoever demysed and grannted made of the aforesaid mesuage lands tenements and other the premysses or of eny percell thereof and all and singuler the messuages lands tenements voyd gronds rents and reversons of the said Willm Rooper and Willm Rastell with their appurtenances whatsoever in the said parish of Saint Elene to them demysed and letten by the said Anthony Bonvise by a certen Dede Indentyd bearing date the first daye of Aprill in the first yere of the reigne of the said late king Edward the sixth as by the said dede Indentyd made by the said Willm Rooper and Willm Rastell more at large it dothe and maye appere To have and to holde the said great mesuage and other the premisses with there appurtenances to the said Germain Cioll and Benedicte Bonvise from the feast of the natyvyte of Saint John Baptiste last past before the date of the said Indent made by the said Willm Rooper and Willm Rastell unto the ende and terme of ffourscore and nyne yeres then following And to have and to holde all the said great mesuage and other the premisses from the ende of the said terme of yeres unto the said Robert fforthe and his assignes for and during a certen terme then next following as by the

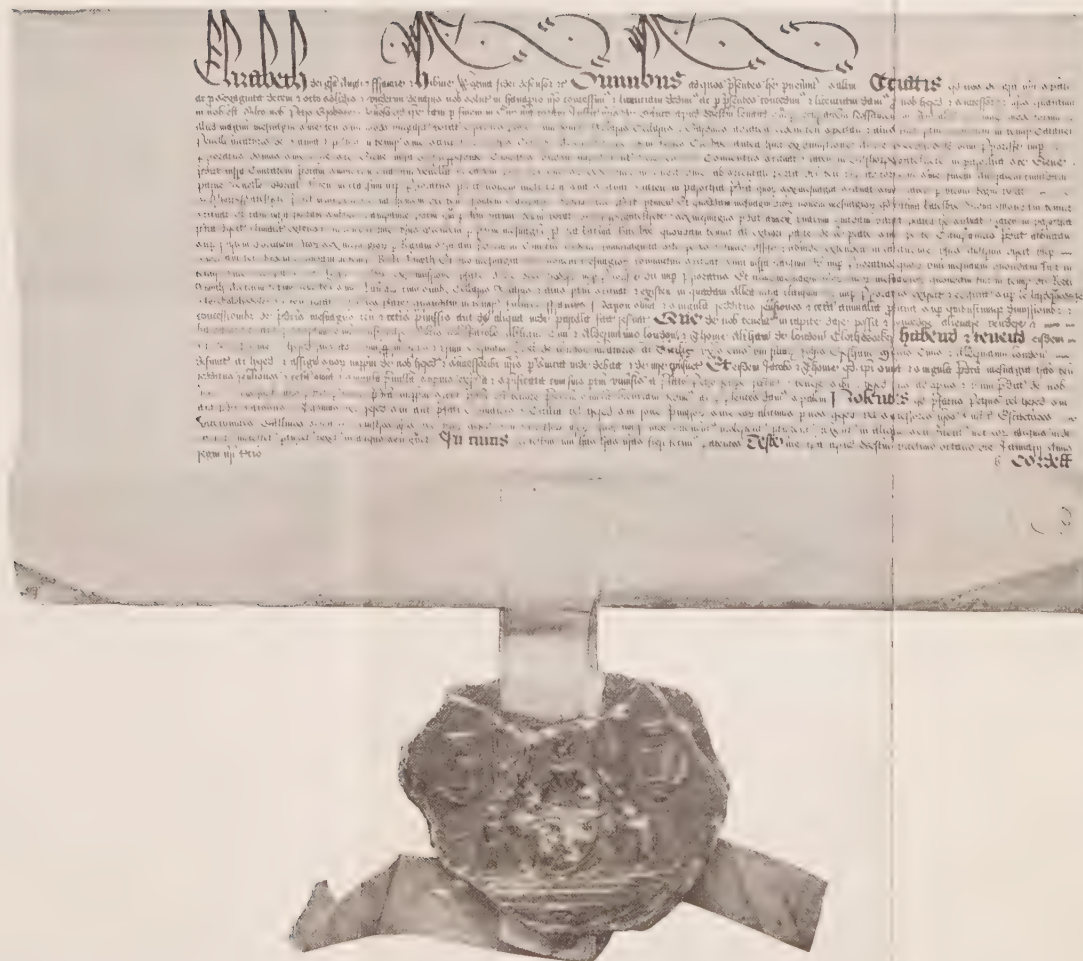
said Indenture of lease now at large amongst other things doth and may appere THIS INDENTURE NOW WITNESSETH that the forsayd Germain Cioll for dyvers resonable considerasons hym specyally moving hath demysed grannted And sett over and doth demyse grannt and sett over by these presents to the said John Cioll and John ffrier their executors and assignes all the forsayd great mesuage or tenement commonly called Crosbeys Place the lane the nyne mesuages or tenements and the chamber and all others the premisses with all and singuler their appurtenances and the said Indentor of lease made by the sayd Anthony Bonvise to the forsayd Willm Rooper and Willm Rastell of the premisses and also the forsayd dede indentyd of lease made by the sayd Willm Rooper and Willm Rastell to the forsayd Germain Cioll and Benedicte Bonvise and Robert fforthe of the same premysses and all his state and interest therein yet to ron TO HAVE AND TO HOLDE all the said great mesuage or tenement comonly called Crosbeyes Place the lane the nyne mesuages the said chamber and all other the lands tenements howses edifices solers sellers garden rents revenues and both the forsayd Indentures of leases and all other the premysses with all and singuler their appurtenances to the sayd John Cioll and John ffrier ther executors admynistrators and assignes to the proepr use and uses of the sayd John Cioll and John ffrier ther executors administrators and assignes from the day of the date hereof unto the full ende and expirason of all the terme and tyme of yeres wich now ar remaynyng and to com of and in the premisses and eny part and percell thereof by reason of the sayd demyse and lease made by the sayd Willm Rooper and Wilhn Rastell to the said Germain Cioll and Benedicte Bonvise mencyonied in their forsayd dede Indentyd AND the sayd John Cioll and John ffrier doth covenantt promys and grannt for them and eyther of them and the heyres executors administrators and assigns of eyther of them to and with the sayd Germain Cioll his executors and administrators by these presents that they the sayd John Cioll and John ffrier and every of them the executors administrators and assignes and the executors administrators and assignes of eny of them shall and will at all tyme and tymes hereafter duryng all the yeres yet to com of the said term of eighty nine yeres peceably and quietly pmytt and suffer the said Germain Cioll his heires executors administrators and assignes TO HAVE hold possesse occupye and enjoy the sayd great mesuage and all other the premisses and any pte and percell thereof and to receyve have and take all the rents issues and profits comyng rysyng and growyng of the same premisses and of eny pt thereof without lett sute interrupteon clayme or demand of the sayd John Cioll and John ffrier or eyther of them or the executors admynstrators or assigner of them or eyther of them or of any other person or persons by ther or any of ther meanes procurement or comandement and funder the said John Cioll and John ffrier do covenantt promys and grannt for them and eyther of them sevally and the executors and administrators of them and eny of them to

and wth the sayd Germain Cioll his executors admynistrators and assignes by these presents that they the same John Cioll and John ffrier and the survyvor of them and the executors or administrators of the survivor of them shall at all tyme and tymes hereafter durying the said terme upon lawfull request to them or any of them made by the sayd Germain Cioll his executors administrators or assignes grannt and assure all ther estate terme and interest in the premisses and eny pt thereof to the sayd Germain his executors and assignes or to suche other pson and persons as he the sayd Germain by his last will or otherwise shall name dispose or appoynt at the coste and charges in the cawse of the sayd Germain his executors or administrators and that the same premisses at the tyme of the sayd grannt and assurance so to be made shalle clerely acquyted exonerated and dyschargyd of all soms guante sales forfeitures charged and incumbrannced whatsoever then had made knowlyged don or sufferyd by the said John Cioll and John ffrier or eyther of them or the executors admynistrators assignes of them or eyther of them PROVIDED ALWAIS that the said John Cioll and John ffrier or the survyvor of them or the executors admynistrators and assignes of them or the survyvor of them or eny of them shall wyllyngly breke any of the covenantts before specyfyed and shall not pforme and kepe the same and eny of them according to the trew intent and meanyng of the same covenantts that then and at all times after it shall and may be lawfull to and for the said Germyn Cioll his executors and administrators into all and singuler the premisses to recenter and the same to have agayn as in his and ther sound estate and interest any thing before expressed to the contrary thereof notwithstanding and the said Germain Cioll dothe covenantte and grannt for him his executors and administrators to and w^t the said John Cioll and John ffrier that he the said Germain his heires and executors or one of them shall at all tymes hereafter during the said terme of eighty nine yeres kepe and save harmeles the sayd John Cioll and John ffrier their exēcutors administrators and assignes and eny of them for the yerly rent of aleven pondes sixteen shillings eight pence resevyd upon one demyse and lease made of the premisses by the forsayd Anthony Bonvise to the sayd Willm Rastell and Willm Rooper IN WITNESS whereof the pties above said to these present Indentures enterchanngeably have sett to their seales gyven the daye and yere firste above written.

“ By me JOHN CYOLL By me JOHANNEN FRYER.”

And three days after the date of the above lease, Peter Crowle, who retained the freehold, obtained a license to sell it to James and Thomas Altham.

“ ELIZABETH by the grace of God Queen of England France and Ireland Defender of the Faith etc TO ALL TO WHOM these present letters shall come GREETING Know that we of our special grace and for seventy and eight shillings and eleven pence paid to us in our Hanaper Have granted and given licence and by these presents



Licence granted by Queen Elizabeth to Peter Crowle, to enable him to dispose of Crosby Hall to James and Thomas Altham, dated 28th January, 1561.

Facsimile of original document preserved at Bishopsgate Institute)

grant and give licence for ourselves our heirs and successors as far as in us lies. To our beloved Peter Crowle gentleman That he as well by a fine to be levied in our court before our Justices of the Bench at Westminster as by recovery feoffment or by any other means may give grant alienate sell bargain or convey by his deed to our beloved James Altham citizen and alderman of London and Thomas Altham of London clothworker All that their great messuage or tenement commonly called Crosbies Place with all houses upper chambers cellars and gardens adjacent belonging to the same tenement and its other appurtenances once in the tenure of Cataneo Pinello merchant of Genoa and afterwards in the tenure or occupation of John Crosbye Which and all of which the same John Crosbye had before of the lease of Alice Woodhowse once prioress of the late Priory house or church of St. Helen within Bisshoppesgate in the city of London late dissolved and the Convent of the same Situate and lying in Bisshoppesgate strete in the parish of St. Helen aforesaid within the said city together with a certain lane in the said parish which extends in length from the east gate of the said tenement up to the corner or south end of a certain small lane turning on the north into a close late belonging to the said Priory And their nine messuages situate and lying in the parish aforesaid of which six messuages are situate and lying on the King's highway called Bisshoppesgate strete aforesaid in length between the front of the said tenement and the front of the bell-tower appertaining to the said church And a certain messuage of the said nine messuages which Katherine Katesbye widow once held is situated within the gate below the said bell-tower as also on the said King's highway called Bisshoppesgate strete and annexed to the six messuages aforesaid together with a certain vacant plot of land situate and lying in the parish aforesaid directly and lineally extending in length towards the east by the said messuage which the said Katherine Katesbye once held on the outside of 'le plate' or 'poste' of the said bell-tower abutting on the north of the said six messuages by the said King's highway into the cemetery there fifty eight feet and a half standard measure and thence extending in breadth towards the south directly to a certain tenement there once in the tenure of Robert Smyth and two messuages of the said nine messuages are conjointly situate within the close of the said late Priory of which one messuage was formerly in the tenure or occupation of the said John Crosbye of the lease of the said Alice Woodhowse late Prioress of the said late Priory And another messuage of those two messuages was formerly in the tenure of the said Rob Smyth And also all that tenement or chamber with all cellars upper chambers and other appurtenances situate and existing in a certain alley within the close of the said late Priory constructed and built over 'le larderhowse' and 'le Colehowse' of the said tenement called Crosbies Place once in the tenure of Juliana Francys And also all and singular rents reversions and other annual profits upon any leases or grants whatsoever of the said messuages tenements and other

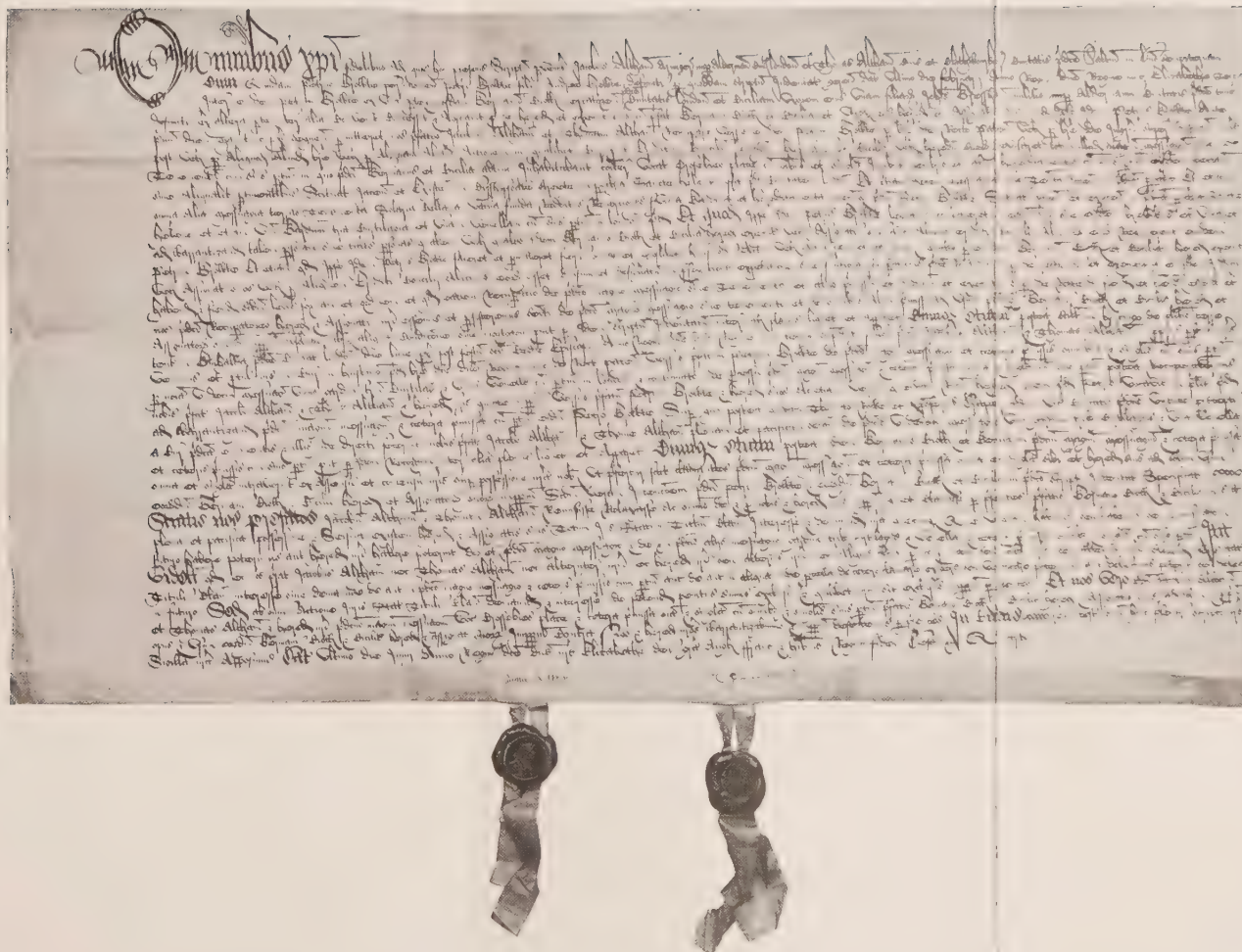
premises or of any parcel of the same made or reserved WHICH are held of us in chief TO HAVE AND TO HOLD to the said James and Thomas and their heirs to the sole proper use and behoof of Germain Cioll of London merchant and Cicilia his wife one of the daughters of John Gresham Knight citizen and alderman of London deceased and their heirs and assigns for ever of us our heirs and successors for the services thence due and of right accustomed AND we have likewise given and by these presents give special licence to the said James and Thomas that they may receive and hold all and singular the said messuages lands tenements rents reversions and all and singular the other premises above expressed and specified with all their appurtenances From the said Peter To them and their heirs to the use and behoof aforesaid of us our heirs and successors aforesaid by the said services for ever BEING UNWILLING that the said Peter or his heirs or the said James and Thomas or his heirs or the said Germain and Cicilia or their heirs in respect of the above premises or any of them should be troubled molested disturbed vexed in any way or oppressed or that any one of them should be troubled molested disturbed vexed in any way or oppressed by us or our successors Justices escheators sheriffs bailiffs or any other servants of us or our said heirs IN WITNESS of which thing we have caused these our letters patent to be made WITNESS ourself at Westminster the twenty eight day of January in the third year of our reign.

CORDELL

ex [amined] "

The brothers James and Thomas Altham on the 30th of June, 1561, surrendered the freehold in favour of Germain Cioll and Cicely his wife.

"To all faithful in Christ to whom this present writing shall come James Altham Esquire late Alderman of the city of London and Thomas Altham citizen and clothworker of the said city Greeting eternal in the Lord. Since a certain Peter Crowle by the name of Peter Crowle son and heir of Andrew Crowle deceased by a certain writing indented bearing date the last day of February in the third year of the reign of our present sovereign Lady Elizabeth Between the said Peter Crowle on the one part and a certain Germain Cioll merchant of the said city of London and Cicilia his wife one of the daughters of John Gresham Knight late Alderman of the said city then deceased on the other part amongst other things COVENANTED granted and agreed for himself his heirs and executors with the said Germain Cioll and Cicilia his wife and both of them their heirs and assigns That he the said Peter Crowle before the first day of May next following Would suffer us the said James Altham and Thomas Altham to recover against the said Peter Crowle by Writ of the right Patent or writ of ingress on disseisin in le post or by any other writ or action in any court as the learned counsel of the said Germain and Cicilia or their heirs may devise All that messuage or tenement with its appurtenances in which the said Germain and



Deed of Release by James and Thomas Altham in favour of Germain Cioll and Cicely his wife, dated 30th June, 1561.

(Facsimile of the original document preserved at Bishopsgate Institute)

Cicilia at that time inhabited in common called Crosbies Place with all and singular rights members and other hereditaments with their appurtenances belonging to the same or in any way appertaining Situate lying and being in Bysshopsgate Streete in the parish of Saint Helen within the said city of London And also ten messuages or tenements upper chambers cellars vacant sites rents reversions services gardens and all hereditaments of the said Peter Crowle Situate lying and being in the said parish of Saint Helen and also one garden three curtilages and one lane with its appurtenances in London aforesaid And that he the said Peter Crowle would lawfully appear to the same writ or writs and will vouch to warranty such and such persons as the said Germain Cioll and Cicilia their heirs executors and assigns or any of the learned counsel of any them might require of the same Peter Crowle And also that the said Peter Crowle would do and allow to be done all such act or acts thing or things which should be determined or designed by the said Germain Cioll and Cicilia their heirs executors or assigns or by any of the learned counsel of any of them in pursuance expedition or completion of the said recovery and of giving judgment on the same and execution of the said judgment to be had and made according to the form and order of law And that the same recovery concerning the said large meussage tenement and other premises and the judgment and the execution of the same to be had and made would take place and that we the said recoverers our heirs and assigns might be and stand seised of the said great messuage or tenement and of all other premises to the use of the said Germain Cioll and Cicilia their heirs and assigns for ever absolutely and without any condition or mortgage as by the said writing indented amongst other things plainly appears And whereas also in the court of hustings concerning pleas of lands held in the Guildhall of the said city of London Monday after the feast of St. Chad the Bishop in the third year of our said Sovereign lady We the said James Altham and Thomas Altham came in our own persons and produced in court of Hustings the said writ of our said sovereign lady of right patent against the said Peter Crowle concerning the said great messuage and the other premises all and singular with their appurtenances by the name of eleven messuages one garden three curtilages and one lane with appurtenances in London and in continuation of the suit shall have recovered the said great messuages and other premises all and singular to us the said James Altham and Thomas Altham and our heirs in quiet for ever against the said Peter Crowle and his heirs And also against a certain Richard Horsted whom the said Peter vouched in the said plea to warrant the said great messuage and other premises with appurtenances to the said Peter Crowle Upon which afterwards a certain Thomas Rowe and Christopher Draper then sheriffs of the said city by virtue of a precept emanating from the said court and thence directed to them gave to us the said James Altham and Thomas Altham full and peaceful seisin of the said eleven messuages one garden three curtilages and one lane and other premises with appurtenances

as by the said record among other things plainly appears And whereas also the said Germain Cioll and Cicilia have entered into the said great messuage and other premises all and singular with the assent and consent of us upon possession being had by us as appears Claiming the said great messuage and other premises all and singular to themselves and their heirs to the sole use of the said Germain Cioll and Cicilia their heirs and assigns for ever According to the true intent of the said Peter Crowle and the same Germain Cioll and Cicilia specified in the said indentured writing Know that we the said James Altham and Thomas Altham have surrendered released and have entirely for us and our heirs for ever quitclaimed by these presents to the said Germain Cioll and Cicilia in full and peaceful possession and seisin to them their heirs and assigns all our right state title claim interest and demand whatsoever which we have ever had or have or shall have in any manner in the future or our heirs can have of and in the said great messuage and of and in the other said messuages garden three curtilages lane and other premises all and singular with their appurtenances In such a manner that neither we the said James Altham nor Thomas Altham nor our heirs or the heirs of either of us nor any one else by us for us or in our names or the name of one of us can or ought to claim demand or challenge in the future any right estate title claim interest or demand of or in the said great messuage and other premises with appurtenances or of or in any parcel of the same But shall be excluded us and any one of us for ever by these presents from any action of right estate title claim demand or interest to be taken on the aforesaid And we the said James Altham and Thomas Altham and our heirs will warrant and for ever defend by these present letters the said great messuage called Crosbies Place and the other premises all and singular with all and singular appurtenances to the said Germain Cioll and Cicilia their heirs and assigns to the sole and proper use and behoof of the same Germain Cioll and Cicilia their heirs and assigns for ever against us and our heirs In witness of which thing we have set to this present writing our seals Given the last day of June in the third year of the reign of our said sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England France and Ireland Defender of the faith etcetera.

(Signed) JAMES ALTHAM. THOMAS ALTHAM."

Germain Cioll and Cicely his wife now by the above deed became the freeholders of Crosby Place.

Contemporary with Bonvisi, Crowle and Cioll, was Sir Thomas Gresham, the greatest commercial spirit of his age, and he, being a resident at Gresham House, immediately opposite, must have seen much of, and entered into, the life at Crosby Place. Particularly must this have been so during Cioll's occupancy, seeing that the two men were closely related, Sir Thomas being cousin to Cioll's



SIR THOMAS GRESHAM.

(From an engraving by H. Robinson, after Holbein)

wife Cicely. It is only natural to assume that much of Gresham's commercial enterprise was discussed freely with his kinsfolk and neighbours, and doubtless all his plans for the building of the Royal Exchange were submitted to Cioll as well as to other neighbours, and counsel taken before propounding his scheme to Queen Elizabeth. Whether this be so or not, it is certainly true that, "on the 9th February, 1564 or 1565, Gresham was in company with Cioll and other merchants, and he most frankly and lovingly promised that within a month after the Bourse was finished, he would present it in equal moieties to the City and the Mercers' Company. In token of his sincerity, he thereupon gave his hand to Sir William Gerrard, and in the presence of assembled friends, drank a carouse to his kinsman Sir Thomas Rowe." Cioll probably came over from Spain in the train of King Philip, and was at this time a well known and an opulent person; but it appears that a little later he fell into some financial difficulty, for in a letter dated 26th March, 1566, Sir Thomas Gresham writes:—

"I am so bold as to send you a letter that my cosin Ciole hath
 "written unto me, wherein I praie you, for my sake, as to helpe
 "him to his monny, if it be possible, in this his great necessitie;
 "whom I will insewre you, is fallen in decay only by losse of sea and
 "Bankrowts."

Cioll and his wife were forced to give up the house on the 15th May, 1566, when the whole of the property as granted to Bonvisi, excepting four tenements with their appurtenances, grounds, yards, vaults, cellars, stables, void grounds next adjoining on the north side of the said tenement, and "a foot and a half breadth of void ground, running in length by the brick wall on the east side of one of the said tenements, late in the tenure of Agnes Bigger, widow," passed by purchase to Alderman William Bond for £1,600. Cioll's financial trouble may explain why Gresham left by will to his cousin Cicely, of whom he was very fond, a considerable legacy. She continued to reside in one of the houses in Great St. Helen's, which had formerly belonged to Crosby Place, until the time of her death on the 10th January, 1609. That she was not reduced to actual want through the failure of her husband is evidenced by her will dated the 25th August, 1608, in which she left a legacy of £6 13s. 4d. to her "loving friend Mr. Ball, preacher at St. Helens," with a request that he should preach a sermon at her burial; and

to some 80 poor women she gave 12 pence and a gown, costing £1 6s. 8d. a piece. Of the 80 poor women, 20 were to be of the parish of St. Helen's, 20 of St. Michael Bassishaw, and the others as her executors should appoint. She left £50 to provide a dinner to be kept at her dwelling house in Bishopsgate Street, for the entertainment of her relations and friends attending the burial; and she also bequeathed a sum of £120 for the purchase of lands, tenements, &c., in London to be vested in trustees of the several parishes of St. Michael Bassishaw and St. Helen's, to the end that the churchwardens should distribute the income to "poor widows and sole women every sabbath day in the morning, two-pence a-piece in bread." The executors of Cicely Cioll, paid to each parish referred to, the sum of £60 as their proportion of the legacy.

In the return made by the Commissioner, who, in 1902, held an enquiry on the charities of St. Helen's, it was shown that the interest had been paid into a general donation account, but, by a resolution of the vestry, it was determined to add the interest to the fund for the distribution of bread, pursuant to the will of the donor.

CHAPTER VII

ALDERMAN WILLIAM BOND AND FAMILY, AND SIR JOHN SPENCER,
1566—1609

OF the next tenant, Alderman William Bond, it is recorded in the Acts of the Privy Council that “for his contemptuous behaviour in traphicking to Narva, contrary to a commandement geven him by the Boarde, by the Queene’s order [he was on the 7th November, 1564] comitted to the Flete, where he was kept in close confinement for a week.”

It is very interesting to note that, while in 1542 Bonvisi had secured this enormous property for the small sum of £207, we find Alderman William Bond 24 years later prepared to pay £1,600 for it, and the transfer of the freehold to him took place on the 15th May, 1566:—

“THIS INDENTURE made the fyftene daie of Maye in the nyneth year of the reigne of owre soveraigne Ladie Elizabeth by the Grace of God Queene of England France and Irelande defender of the faieith. Between Germayn Cioll of London marchant and Cecilie his wif on the one partie and William Bonde citizin and alderman of London aforesaid on the other partie WITNESSETH that the said Germayn Cioll and Cecilie his wif by vertue and force of the Queen’s maiesties licence first had and obteyned and for and in consideration of the som of one thousand and sixt hundreth pounds of lawfull money of England to the said Germayn Cioll in hand paid at or before the ensealinge hereof by the saied William Bonde whereof and wherewith the saied Germayn Cioll doeth knowlege him self well and truelie satisfied contented and paid and thereof and of any part and parcel thereof doeth clerelie acquite and discharge the said William Bond his heires executors and administrators and any of theym by these presents have given granted bargayned and solde and by these presents doe fullie and clerelie give graunt bargayn and sell unto the saied William Bond all that great capitall mesuage or tenement with the appurtenances

comonlie called Crosbies Place sett lyinge and beinge in the parishe of St. Ellen within Byshopesgate of London and all howses Hall parlours chambres cellers vaultes warehouses garretts gardeins stables courte yeardes rowmes entries welles water passagies easements comodities rights members and appurtenances whatsoever to the saied great mesuage or tenemente nowe belonginge or appertayninge or which at any tyme heretofore have bene accepted reputed known taken used or occupied as part parcel or membre of the same great mesuage or tenement called Crosbies Place or any part thereof and were heretofore conveyed by the letters patents of the late king Henrye the eight to Anthony Bonvix also Bonvise disceased And in as large and ample manor and forme as the same Anthony Bonvix also Bonvise sometyme did holde occupye and enjoye the same prmisses or any parte thereof And in as large and ample manor and forme as he the said Germayn Cioll and Cecilie his wif or any of their assignes nowe have holde and enjoye the same prmisses and any part and parcel thereof Together with all that their lane or waye in the saied parishe of Saint Ellen leadinge from the back gates of the saied great mesuage or tenement called Crosbies Place in the parishe aforesaid eastward extendinge in length from the saied gates of the saied great mesuage or tenement unto the corner or south end of the waye there leadinge or turninge into St. Ellens Closse in the parishe aforesaid And also all that tenement or chambre with the appurtenances situated and beinge in a certayn aley in the saied parishe edified and buylded over or upon the larder howse and the cole-howse of the saied great mesuage called Crosbies Place sometyme in the tenure or occupacon of Julian Francis AND furthermore the saied Germayn Cioll and Cecilie his wif for the consideracons aforesaid have likewise given graunted bargayned and solde and by these presents doe fullye and clerelie give graunt bargayn and sell unto the saied William Bonde all those five mesuages or tenements with their appurtenances joyninge together next to the foregate of the street side of the saied great mesuage or tenement called Crosbies Place nowe or late in the sowall tenure or occupacons of Robert Halle, Robert Rixbie, Laurence Deacon, Domyngo Pratt and John Edwards or their assignes and also all other their mesuages tenements and hereditaments whatsoever with the appurtenances sett lyinge and beinge in the parishe of St. Ellen aforesaid which saied great mesuage or tenement called Crosbies Place and all and singular other the premisses with the appurtenances and any part and parcel thereof are situated lyinge and beinge within the parishe of St. Ellens within Byhopsgate And now sometyme parcell of the possession of the late disused monasterie or Priorie of St. Ellen within Byhopsgate of London aforesaid and afterwarde purchased by the foresaid Anthony Bonvix afterward called Bonvise to him and to his heires for ever of the gifte and graunt of the late kinge Henrie the eighte as by the letters patents of the said late kinge made under his great seale of Englande bearinge date at Westm the nyneth daye of Septembre

in the foure and thirtie yere of his reign most plaenlie may appear. AND the said Germanyn and Cecilie his wif for the consideracons aforesaid doe likewise give graunt bargayn and sell unto the saied William Bonde all the state right title interest possession reversion clayme and domaunde of the saied Germanyn Cioll and Cecilie his wif in and to all and singular the premisses And all rents revenues issues and profitts of the premisses and any part and parcel thereof Together with all and singular evidence dedes letters patents charges scripted writings and munyments touchinge and concerninge the premisses or any part thereof which at any tyme come to the handes of the saied Germanyn or Cecilie All which evidence dedes charges writingys and munyments the saied Germanyn hathe delivered at the ensealinge of these presents EXCEPTE and out of this bargayn sale and graunt alwaies reserved unto the saied Germanyn Cioll and Cecilie his wif their heires and assignes for on all those foure tenements with their appurtenances and all the groundes yards vaultes cellars leads entries passages water roomes lightes easements void groundes next adjoyninge before any of them of the north side of the same tenements and a foote and a half breadth of void grounde more ronninge in length by the bricke wall on the east side of one of the saied tenements latelie in the tenure of Agnes Bigger Widowe And all other commodities to the same saied tenement or to any and to any of them belonginge or in any wise apperteyninge or which at any time heretofore hath bene accepted reputed known taken used or occupied as part parcel or member of any of them And which nowe be or late were in the sowall tenures or occupacons of Robert Cooke Peter Dodd Edmund Wanton Agnes Bigger widowe or their assignes lyinge and beinge in the parishe aforesaid that is to saie the forepart of two of the saied tenements in the tenures of the saied Robert Cooke and Peter Dodd by at the north end of the said five great tenements above bargayned and solde unto the steple of St. Ellens parishe aforesaid and the residue of the said tenement above excepted by on the north part of the saied greate mesuage called Crosbies Place and be severed and divided from the saied great mesuage with a wall of bricke and stone And also excepted and in forme aforesaid reserved to the saied Germanyn and Cecilie and their heires one chambre lyinge on the north side of the wall of bricke and stone of the great chambre which great chambre is over and above the greate parlour of the saied Crosbies Place conteyninge from the saied wall of bricke and stone northward twentie foote of assise and from the west part thereof to the east two and twentie foote of assise And all the rowmes under the same to the maen grounde and a garret directlie on the same chambre adjoyninge likewise to the wall of bricke and stone aforesaid in the parishe aforesaid and likewise excepted and in forme aforesaid reserved to the saied Germanyn and Cecilie and their heirs one other litle garret or loft conteyninge about twelve foote square adjoyninge to the east ende of the said garret last mentioned directlie on the toppe of the foresaid staires leadinge up to

the greate chambre of the saied Crosbies Place TO HAVE HOLDE OCCUPIE AND ENJOYE the foresaied great mesuage or tenement called Crosbies Place with the appurtenances and all other mesuages howses tenements gardein cellers vaults rowmes waies entries rents reversionis evidences dedes and all other the premisses with all and singular their appurtenances except before excepted unto the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes for ever to the onelie use and behouf of the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes absolutolie without any condicon or mortgage. AND the saied Germayn Cioll for him his heires executors administrators doeth covenante promise and graunt to and with the saied William Bonde his heires executors and assignes and any of them by these presents That they the saied Germayn Cioll and Cecilie are and be at the tyme of the sealinge and deliveringe of these presents lawfullie seased of a good sufficient and lawfull state in ffee simple to their owne present use and behouf of and in the aforesaied great mesuage called Crosbies Place and all other the premisses with the appurtenances and any part and parcel thereof before bargayned and solde by thies presents And that the said Germayn Cioll and Cecilie are at the tyme of sealinge and deliveringe of these presents vearly true rightfull and lawfull owners of the premisses and any part thereof and have full power good rightfull and lawfull authoritie to give graunt bargayn sell convey and assure the saied great mesuage or tenement called Crosbies Place and all other the premisses before bargayned and solde and any parte or parcell thereof unto the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes for ever accordinge to the same purport intent and true meaninge of these presents AND further the saied Germayne Cioll for him his heires executors administrators doeth covenant promise and graunt to and with the saied William Bonde his heires executors and assignes and any of them by these presents That they the saied Germayn Cioll and Cecilie their heires executors and administrators upon lawfull request and reasonable tyme of warninge to him and theym to be given shall and will at all tyme and tymes hereafter and from tyme to tyme clearlie acquite exonerate discharge in sufficientlie save harmeles as well the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes as also the said great mesuage or tenements called Crosbies Place and all other the pmisses above bargayned and solde with the appurtenances and any parte and parcell thereof of from and concerninge all formes bargaynes sales leases charges titles troubles demandes judgments execucons statutes fynes fynes for alienacons recognizances anuyties ffees and all other incumbrrnces whatsoever had made done caused or consented unto by the saied Germayn Cioll and Cecilie his wif or either of them or by any other person or persons whatsoever havinge or which hath had any state or interest by or under the saied letters patents of the tenements and services hereafter to be due to the chief lorde or lordes of the ffee or ffees thereof in respect of their coignionces onelie excepted and profesed AND further the saied Germayn Cioll for him his heires executors and administrators doeth covenant promise

and graunt to and with the saied William Bonde his heires executors and assignes by these presents That they the said Germain Cioll and Cecilie and either of them and the heires and assignes of them and either of them shall and will at all tymes and from tyme to tyme hereafter duringe the space of five years next ensuyng the date of these presents at and upon the lawfull request of the saied William Bonde his heires or assignes to them or any of them to be made and at the coste and charges in the lawe of the saied William Bonde his heires or assignes do make knowlege and suffer to be done made knowledged and suffered all and any suche further acte and acts thinge and things devise and devises conveyance and conveyances assurance and assurances in the lawe whatsoever for the further and more perfecte assuringe and sure makinge and for the close and absolute havinge and enjoyng in ffee simple of the saied great mesuage called Crosbies Place and all other the premisses with the appurtenances (except before excepted) unto the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes in ffee simple as by the saied William Bonde his heires or assignes or by his or their learned counsell shall be reasonable devised or advised AND the saied Germain Cioll for him his heires executors and administrators doeth covenante promise and graunt to and with the saied William Bonde his heires executors and assignes by thies presents That he the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes shall and may at all tymes hereafter peaceablie and quietlie have hold occupye and enjoye the saied great mesuage or tenement called Crosbies Place and all and singular the premisses with the appurtenances above bargayned and solde and any parte and parcell thereof with their appurtenances accordinge to the tend purport effecte and true meaninge of thies presents without any lett trouble or disturbance of the saied Germain Cioll and Cecilie his wif their heires executors or assignes or of any other personne or personnes by his or their meanes assent right title or procurement AND the saied William Bonde for him his heires executors administrators and assignes and for any of them doeth covenante and graunt to and with the saied Germain Cioll and Cecilie his wife and to and with either of them and to and with the heires executors administrators and assignes of them and either of them by these presents That he the saied William Bond his heires executors administrators and assignes at all tymes hereafter and from tyme to tyme at and upon all and any lawfull request and requestes and reasonable tyme and warninge to him or them or any of them to be made and geven by the saied Germain and Cecilie or either of them their heires executors or assignes or any of them and at the coste and charges of the saied Germain and Cecilie or of either of them or of the heires of either of them shall and will bringe further and show further in all and any courte and courtes of our souvaigne Ladie the Queens maiestie her heires or successors within the Citie of London or at Westm [Westminster] where and when the saied Germain Cioll and Cecilie his wif their heires or assignes or the heires or assignes of

any of them shall necessarilie require to have the same to be brought as well the foresaid letters patents and the dede and dedes whereby the saied Germayn and Cecilie purchased the foresaid premises as also all other dedes evidence and writings which the said Germayn hathe delivered to the same William at the sealinge hereof whole and uncanceled for the maintenance of the title and interest of the same Germayn and Cecilie and either of them their heires and assignes of in and to all and singular the mesuages tenements and all other the premises with all and singular their appurtenances and of any or any part parcell or member thereof above by thies presents excepted AND furthermore whereas in the saied letters patents made by the foresaid late kinge Henrie the eighte above mentioned there is one yearlie rent or tenthe of thrie and twentie shillinge eight pence reserved to the said late kinge his heires and successors as well out of the saied great mesuage as of all other the premisses with the appurtenances as by the said letters patents it doeth and may plainlie appear The saied William Bonde for him his heires executors and administrators doeth covenante promise and graunt to and with the saied Germayn Cioll and Cecilie his wif and either of them and to and with the heires executors and assignes of them and either of them by thies presents That he the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes shall paie or cause to be paid yearlie unto the Queens maiestie that now is her heires and successors the foresaid yearlie rent or tenthe of thrie and twentie shillinge eight pence reserved upon the saied letters patents And thereof and of any part and parcell thereof shall clearlie acquite exonerate discharge or save harmeles as well the saied mesuages tenements and other the premisses with the appurtenances above by thies presents excepted and any part and parcell thereof as also the saied Germayn Cioll and Cecilie his wif and either of them and the heires executors and assignes of them and either of them for ever AND finallie the foresaid Germayn Cioll and Cecilie for them their heires and assignes doe covenante and graunt to and with the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes by thies presents That neither the saied Germayn Cioll nor the saied Cecilie his wif nor their heires or assignes nor any other personne or personnes whatsoever for them or in their names or by or under their right title or interest shall not at any tyme hereafter by reason of any buyldinge or repairacon hereafter to be made upon the saied fourte tenementes with the appurtenances above excepted or any part thereof in any place more near to the premisses by thies presents bargayned and solde then the buyldinge of those fourte tenementes nowe be stoppe hyndre or by any other waies impaire the lighte of any windowes or lightes heretofore used for lightes belonginge or appertayninge to the saied great mesuage or tenemente called Crosbies Place with the appurtenances or any part or parcell thereof But that the saied William Bonde his heires and assignes for ever hereafter may quietlie and peaceable have use and enjoye the same lighte in as large and beneficiall manor and forme as the saied Germayn Cioll and

Cecilie his wif or the aforesaid Anthony Bonvise or any of them now or heretofore have done used and enjoyed the same without lett trouble or disturbance of the said Germain Cioll and Cecilie his wif or either of them their heires or assignes or of any other personne or personnes whatsoever by their meanes assent or procurement any thinge above said to the contrarie notwithstandinge. IN WITNESS whereof the parties aforesaid to these presents interchangeable have putt their seales HEONEN the daie and yere above written

[Signed] By me GERMAIN CIOLL."

Bond, who was an exceedingly wealthy man, and an intimate friend of Sir Thomas Gresham, became Sheriff in the year 1568, and shortly afterwards carried out some extensive repairs and additions at Crosby Place, special mention being made of the "Turret on the top thereof" which is said to have increased the height of the building. No trace of this addition is now to be found unless it refers to a sort of lanthorn which seems to have once existed in the roof of the Hall.

Three years after Alderman Bond took up his residence here D'Assonleville, the Spanish ambassador, came to England in January, 1569, to demand the restitution of certain treasure, which had, earlier in the month, been seized by the Lord Mayor. He was detained by Elizabeth at Rochester in order that he might witness the military preparations which were going forward in that great arsenal, after which he, with his retinue, was conducted to London, and for some time resided at Crosby Place, doubtless receiving that generous hospitality which appears to have been characteristic of all its occupants. D'Assonleville, however, had very little intercourse with those about him, as that had been expressly forbidden. Meanwhile the treasure which at this time was causing so much trouble was brought to London and deposited in the Tower, and as all negotiations for its recovery proved fruitless, the Duke of Alva's emissary left for Dover on the 8th March, having obtained nothing beyond an assurance that the treasure would be surrendered when the King of Spain promised indemnity to all Elizabeth's subjects in the Low Countries, and agreed to ratify the ancient treaty and alliance between the crown of England and the house of Burgundy. Alderman Bond died in 1576, and a little more than three years later Sir Thomas Gresham, who is believed to have been a frequent visitor at Crosby Place, also passed away

and was buried close to his friend in St. Helen's Church. The epitaph on Alderman Bond's monument erected to his memory there, describes him as "most famous in his age for his great adventures both by sea and land." From the Alderman the property descended to his second and younger sons William, Nicholas and Martyn Bond, his first son, Sir Daniel, mentioned in his will, probably dying before his father, and subsequently to the date of the deed made in 1574.

"I bequeath to my welbeloued wief, according to the custome of
 " the Cittie, the thirde parte of my substance ; the other thirde part
 " to my children ; to say, Daniell Bond, William Bond, Nicholas Bond,
 " and Martyn Bond. And forasmuch as my sonne William Whytmore
 " hath with my daughter a thousande pounce of money sterling, my
 " promyse ys that each of my children hauing so moche, then my
 " daughter Whytmore to haue as the rest of my children shall haue,
 " reseruing my heire, unto whom and to my other three sonnes I giue
 " and bequeath my place, garden and tenemente thereunto belonging,
 " and that the suruior of them shall enjoye yt, and so the heires of
 " their bodyes for euer. Item, my mynde ys that my wief shall con-
 " tinewe there and joyntly continewe in the trade of marchandise.
 " And if my wief do continewe a Widowe, then I give her two
 " hundreth pounce of my parte and porcon [portion] ; yf she refuse
 " yt and marrye, then yf the lawe permitte yt, my mynde ys she shall
 " departe out of that mansyon howse, lest that by marrying of such
 " a one shall defeate my sonnes of the said place. Item, I bequeathe
 " and giue to my louing brother George Bond the some of two
 " hundreth pounce, and to each Childe of his, at the daye of their
 " mariage twentie marke a pece."

" And each of all my seruante to haue black cloath for gownes or
 " cloake, and they that haue fortie pounce a pece to haue a ringe of
 " gold of fortie shillinge a pece, and my name written on yt. So
 " God bless them all. Yf there be any more that maye perchaunce
 " come to my seruice, I give them also twenty nobles. I say six
 " pounce thirtene shillinge foure pence a pece. And to Besse, my
 " mayde, one hundreth pounce to her mariage ; to the rest of my
 " mayde twentie nobles a pece." [Here follow numerous bequests to
 " relatives, friends, and other servants not already referred to, and in
 " the aggregate amounting to a large sum of money.] " And as
 " concerninge the order and disposition of my lande, I doe declare
 " my last Will and Testament of the same in mannere and forme
 " as insueth :—ffirst, I deuise and bequeth Margaret, my well beloued
 " wief, all that my now dwellinge-house, called Crosby Place, in
 " the parishe of St. Ellens, within the Cittie of London. To haue
 " and to holde to her for and duringe so long time as she shall
 " liue sole and unmarried, for and in lewe and recompence of her
 " dower she may haue of in or to any other my Lande and Tene-
 " mente in London. And imediately that she shall marie, I will

" bequeath the same, my said dwellinge-house unto William Bond,
 " my second sonne, for and duringe his naturall life, payinge out of
 " the same to my sonne Nicholas Bond xiiijl. xiijs. iiijd. yearely
 " duringe the naturall life of the said William Bond, at the feaste of
 " the natiuitie of St. John Baptiste, and the birth of our Lord God,
 " by equall porcons, or within xxtie dayes nexte, after eueria of the
 " said feaste. And also payinge unto my sonne Martyn Bond other
 " xiiijl. xiijs. iiijd. at the like feaste or dayes, and by like porcons
 " duringe the naturall life of the said William Bond. And after the
 " decease of the said William Bond, then I deuise the same, my
 " said house, unto Nicholas Bond, for terme of his life, payinge to
 " my saide son Martyn Bond, twentie pounce by yeare, at the said
 " feaste or dayes by equall porcons. And after his decease, I will
 " and bequeath the same unto my said sonne Martyn for terme
 " of his naturall life. And after his decease, I will and bequeath
 " the same unto Daniell Bond, my sonne and heire apparante, and
 " to the heires males of his bodye, lawfully begotton, and for
 " default of such yssue, I will and bequeathe the same to my
 " said sonne William Bond and to the heires males of his bodye
 " lawfully begotten. And for want of such yssue, I will and
 " bequeath to my said sonne Nicholas, and to the heires males of
 " his bodye, lawfully begotten. And for want of such yssue, I will
 " and bequeathe the same to my son Martyn, and to the heires males
 " of his bodye, lawfully begotten. And for want of such yssue, I will
 " and bequeath the same to my nephewe William Bond, sonne of my
 " brother George Bond, and to the heires males of his bodye lawfully
 " begotten. And for want of such yssue, I will and deuise the same
 " to the right heires of my said sonne Daniell Bond for euer. And I
 " leaue to discende all my other Land and Tenemente in the said
 " parrishe of St. Ellyns aforesaid, or elle [else] where within the
 " Citie of London, to my said sonne Daniell Bond, accordinge to the
 " lawes of this realme for a full third part excedinge and beinge more
 " than a third parte. And further I will, charge, and louingly
 " require my said children, that they nor any of them, doe not alter,
 " infringe or chaunge, this my deuise of my lande to them made, but
 " suffer the same to remain and be in forme as I haue before by this
 " last will and Testament lymitted and appointed the same. In
 " witness whereof I have subscribed this my will and Testament for
 " and concerning my lande, the xxxth of maye, 1576."

William Bond continued to reside here for some years with his mother, in accordance with the wish of his father, expressed in his will; his brother occupying an adjoining tenement which William afterwards purchased from William Harrington, merchant tailor, of London. It is described as a house in the close of St. Helen, with "a garden, garden-plot and orchard," then in the occupation of his brother Nicholas, and a tenement in the occupation of one Vaparlse,

which garden and orchard is described in the deed of sale as "lying between the garden, late called Crosbie's garden, belonging to Crosbie's Place on the west part and the garden plot or orchard with the said tenement on the east part."

During the period that the freehold was held by William and Martyn, the house was acquired for the reception of various foreign ambassadors. Among these are mentioned Chancellor Henry Ramelius, a Danish ambassador from Frederick II., to Queen Elizabeth, who visited England in 1586; the Duc de Sully, in 1594, surrounded with a prodigious amount of splendour; and according to the Register of St. Helen's Church, it would appear that another French ambassador visited Crosby Place, as one Nicholas Fylio, described as secretary to the French ambassador, was buried there on the 23rd of September, 1592.

Martyn Bond was a captain of the City trained bands, and in 1588 he marched at their head to Tilbury. Doubtless he was present at Tilbury Fort on that historic occasion when Elizabeth addressed the troops in 1588. In 1607 he laid the foundation stone of a new gate to replace that at Aldgate, which had fallen into such disrepair, that it had to be demolished. While excavating for fresh foundations, some Roman coins were found, and these Martyn Bond caused to be copied in stone, and placed as medallion decorations on the outer side of the gate. He was treasurer of St. Bartholomew's Hospital from 1619 to 1636, and a portrait of him is preserved in that institution, as is also a pewter inkstand bearing his arms and the inscription "The gift of Mr. Martin Bond, 1619."

SIR JOHN SPENCER

From William and Martyn Bond the palace passed by purchase in 1594 to the rich clothworker, Alderman Sir John Spencer, who served the office of Sheriff in 1583-4, he paying the sum of £2,560. This shows an increased value in the property of nearly a thousand pounds during the period it was occupied by the Bond family. Sir John Spencer's immense wealth rendered him one of the most conspicuous persons of his age, and obtained for him the sobriquet of "Rich Spencer." Many are the interesting anecdotes with which his history abounds. It was said that he was worth a million of money—an extraordinary amount for a person to possess

in those days—and his fame as the wealthiest citizen of his time was so great that a pirate of Dunkirk laid a plot to kidnap him while away from his house, in order to obtain a ransom fixed at £50,000. The plan did not succeed as Sir John happened to stop at Crosby Place that night. The account of the pirate's unsuccessful attempt is contained in a pamphlet published in 1651, entitled "The Vanity of the Lives and Passions of Men." Within a month or so after purchasing Crosby Place, he was elected Lord Mayor of London, and the splendour of his mayoralty is traditional. According to Stow he made "great reparation" and considerably enlarged his new house for the reception of his guests; but Spencer, always the keen business man, to some extent injured the ancient appearance of the place by tacking on to it a "most large warehouse" which he "builded near thereunto," thus converting a portion of the mansion into a sort of business house with its offices, while continuing to use it as a residence. The warehouse referred to was afterwards the Jewish Synagogue in Great St. Helen's.

Spencer possessed much public spirit, loyalty and patriotism, qualities needed by England at this time of great concern at a threatened invasion from Spain. Though connected with many leading characters of the Court of that day, he was a champion of the rights and privileges of the City, as was proved a few years later, when during his mayoralty the wetness of the season was so serious as to advance the price of wheat to £3 4s. 0d. per quarter, and grain of all sorts was so scarce that, in order to provide against a famine in the City, the several Companies were induced, by Sir John's influence, to buy a certain quantity of corn and to lay it up in the public granaries at the Bridge House. At this time, December, 1594, Sir John Hawkins, who was then Admiral of the Fleet, required the Bridge House for the storage of the Navy's provisions, and also the ovens that were there for the baking of biscuits for the Fleet. Sir John and the City Corporation refused to accede to the request of the Admiral, but as he persisted in his demand, Spencer, on December 23rd, sent a letter of remonstrance against Hawkins to Lord Burleigh, High Treasurer, who was a great patron and protector of the City, stating that as the Bridge House was urgently needed for the storage of the City's grain, and that the ovens were also necessary

for the baking of bread for the poor "that they might have the more for their money," the City could not conveniently spare the House for the purpose claimed by Sir John Hawkins. He furthermore suggested that her Majesty had already granaries about Whitehall, Westminster, Winchester House and Tower Hill sufficient for the storage of the provisions. This honest and spirited conduct of the Lord Mayor in refusing to surrender the public granaries was, as might be supposed, highly offensive to the Ministers of his day, accustomed, as they were, to receive an unqualified submission to all their demands, and it drew from Hawkins the reply "that he should hear more to his further dislike." However, Spencer succeeded in his defence of the City's rights.

An occurrence took place connected with the affairs of the City which further shows how zealous Sir John Spencer was in defending the rights and privileges of the City. The Corporation had in its service a most valued Recorder—Sir John Crooke—whom Queen Elizabeth decided to take into her service by way of advancement. The office was thereupon declared vacant, when the Queen sent a letter to the Lord Mayor intimating that she intended to fill it, and requesting him to submit to her the names of such fit persons as he intended to nominate. Hitherto the appointment had been vested in the Corporation, and the Mayor, desirous of maintaining the Corporation's right to elect, submitted one name only, that of James Altham, but the Queen passed him over in favour of one of her own choice, so that Sir John was on this occasion unsuccessful.

It would appear that the apprentices had for some years been getting out of hand, and their insolence, which had become more and more flagrant, proceeded so far, that in June 1595, an alarming riot took place, and we find Sir John very active in the suppression of their tumultuous gatherings. Many of the apprentices were committed to the Compter, and some of them were afterwards executed.

Early in his tenancy he gave a magnificent banquet, to which came Queen Elizabeth and her suite, and one longs to have witnessed the hospitality that he liberally dispensed. We might in imagination re-people the magnificent old Hall with the brilliant company that came and went; some of England's most illustrious statesmen and administrators, whose names are to be found in the civic annals

of the time, would be here, and probably we should find Sir Walter Raleigh, Sidney, Grenville, Drake and Hawkins, and many of those who were in sympathy with "merchant adventurers."

The city of London was not very favourable to the growth of playhouses at this time, and indeed it may be remembered that all the early theatres were outside the City walls, either in Shoreditch or in Southwark, for none were allowed in the City. Queen Elizabeth, however, encouraged the drama, and was so fond of gaiety that she would frequently command her more favoured subjects to arrange masques and revelries for her pleasure. Among the festivities of the year 1594 was the celebration of the grand revels of the Prince of Misrule, by the students of Gray's Inn and The Temple, arranged for the special entertainment of Queen Elizabeth, who had promised to be present with many of her nobility and Court. The story of the masque is told in a very rare tract published some years afterwards, and bearing the title:—

"Gesta Grayorum; or, the history of the high and mighty Prince,
 " Henry, Prince of Peerpoole, Duke of High and Nether Holborn.
 " Marques of St. Giles and Tottenham, Count Palatine of Bloomsbury
 " and Clerkenwell, Great Lord of the cantons of Islington, Kentish
 " Town, Paddington and Knightsbridge . . . who reigned and
 " died, A.D., 1594. Together with a masque as it was presented (by
 " his hynesses command) for the entertainment of Queen Elizabeth,
 " who, with the nobles of both courts was present thereat."

Then follows an account of the doings of the young revellers. Mr. Henry Helmes of Norfolk was elected the Prince of Misrule, and he, attended by his courtiers numbering about 80 all mounted on horses, rode from his court of Graya—Gray's Inn—through Chancery Lane, Fleet Street, Cheapside and Cornhill to the Lord Mayor's House "called Crosby Place in Bishopsgate Street," where a sumptuous and costly dinner awaited the revellers, with a variety of music and all good entertainment. After dinner, the Prince and his company returned in the same order, and the people in the streets thought that it really was some great prince passing through the City. As I have already stated, the tract giving a full account of the masque is so scarce, that I would refer the reader, who wishes to learn more of the details of the revels, to Hone's "Year Book," page 327, *et seq.*

During Spencer's year of office the metropolis was so much

infested with pickpockets and robbers that it was not considered safe to walk through the streets after dark. A school of instruction for pickpockets was found at Smart's Key, near Billingsgate, where youths were taught to practice theft on a dummy figure covered with bells, by taking coin out of a purse concealed about the dummy without jingling the bells.

Although possessing this magnificent house in Bishopsgate, Sir John for the most part resided at his country home, Canonbury House, Islington, leaving Crosby Place at the service of the State as a place for the reception and entertainment of eminent foreigners who came as ambassadors to England with their retinues. In the year 1598 Barneveld, with his colleague Justinus de Nassau and others are said to have occupied Crosby Place during the embassy to Queen Elizabeth with the object of arranging with her the payment of Holland's debt, which was agreed at £800,000. Towards the end of the year 1601 (September) Charles de Gontaut, Duc de Biron, Marshal of France, arrived in London with his magnificent company of 400 noblemen, forming an embassy from Henry IV. of France to Queen Elizabeth, and occupied Crosby Place, imparting to it a magnificence such as had seldom been equalled within its walls, even by Sully himself. In July the following year, Biron was executed for entering into treasonable practices with the Duke of Savoy, against Henry IV.

Nearly two years later, on the accession of James I. to the throne in May, 1603, Henry of Nassau, with Barneveld, Falk, Brederode and other prominent statesmen of the Dutch Commonwealth were sent by the States of Holland as ambassadors ostensibly bearing the congratulations of their nation, but with the main object of securing his aid for the Dutch Protestants, and his co-operation against the intrigues of the Court of Spain. According to Stow these ambassadors were lodged at Crosby Place. Shortly after their arrival at Bishopsgate, these envoys of the States General had a brief audience of the new sovereign, but James manifested small disposition to melt in the fervour of the advocates' eloquence.

About three weeks later, June 15th, 1603, Count de Rosny, better known as the Duc de Sully, Great Treasurer of France, and the most valued counsellor of King Henry IV., came to England with a splendid retinue of over two hundred gentlemen of quality, provided

with the same pretext for his visit, and bent, as much as Barneveld, on securing for his own country all the help that James was inclined to give. The visit of Sully is mentioned here because several historians state that he was lodged at Crosby Place during his embassy; but apart from the question whether it would be reasonable to assume that embassies from different foreign Courts would have been lodged at the one mansion at the same time, however spacious the premises may have been, the recorded facts are directly to the contrary. The truth is that Arundel House, in the Strand, was destined for the reception of Sully, but was not, on his arrival, ready for occupation. It became a matter of considerable embarrassment how he and his retinue should be lodged, and the greater part, he says, thought to pass the first night of their landing in the street; but arrangements were made that until Arundel House was ready for his reception, he should take up his quarters at Crosby Place; which house, however, he does not mention by name, but in his "Memoirs" he says:—"I was accommodated with apartments in a very handsome house situated in a great square, near which all my retinue were also provided with the necessary lodgings." Almost immediately on his arrival, some of the young Frenchmen, his retainers, committed an outrage which might have exposed him and themselves to considerable danger from the enraged citizens. These Frenchmen went to entertain themselves with women of the town; in pursuit of which entertainment they managed to become embroiled with some Englishmen, the upshot of the affair being that swords were drawn, and one of the Englishmen left dead on the spot. The Frenchmen retreated to their quarters, and Crosby Place was speedily surrounded by a mob of 3,000 citizens. Sully, with great presence of mind, pretended extreme indignation at the conduct of his retainers, and, affecting to bring the murderer to justice, condemned him to death, and handed him over to the Lord Mayor to execute the sentence as he thought fit, a method which led to the pardon of the offender. Sully hints that the Mayor was bribed by the relatives of the accused to release the prisoner. My contention that Sully and his following were not housed at Crosby Place is borne out by Sully in his despatches, where it is recorded that on June 21st, 1603, "Barneveld had a long private interview with the ambassador

at Arundel Palace," and again in one of his letters of June 22nd, Sully says: "The Royal Guards, with the Earl of Derby at their head, came early in the afternoon to Arundel House, to escort him to the Thames." In Sully's "Memoirs," volume iv., page 383 *et seq.*, occurs the passage, "On the same afternoon [June 29th, 1603], there was a conference at Arundel House between the Dutch deputies, the English Councillors and De Rosny." These extracts will, I think, be sufficient to prove that Stow and later historians were in error in stating that Sully lodged at Crosby Place beyond the one day, though it is very probable that Sir John Spencer entertained the French ambassador and the 200 gentlemen forming his retinue.

Early in 1599, Elizabeth Spencer, the daughter and sole heiress of Sir John Spencer, had betrothed herself to Lord Compton, afterwards first Earl of Northampton, to which Spencer objected, as he had other ideas for her future. What follows is contrary to our beliefs as to the power exercised in those days by fathers over their children, for in March, 1599, Sir John Spencer was committed to the Fleet prison for beating and misusing her, and for hiding her from Compton, who desired to marry her. In a letter to Dudley Carleton of 15th March, John Chamberlain wrote of him: "If the obstinate and self willed fellow shold persist in his doggedness (as he protests he will) and geve her nothing, the poore Lord shold have a warme catch." Two years later, he was committed to Wood Street Compter, for refusing to pay what was due from him, towards furnishing soldiers and armour.

There is a painting preserved at Castle Ashby, the seat of the Comptons, which appears to confirm a tradition that Elizabeth Spencer was carried off from Canonbury House in a baker's basket, by the contrivance of Lord Compton. Sir John Spencer was so incensed at the elopement of his daughter, that he totally discarded her until a reconciliation was brought about, in 1601, by Queen Elizabeth, who had by this time taken Spencer into her good graces again. The stratagem to which the Queen resorted is well told in Nelson's "Islington," but a brief account may not be out of place here.

While at Greenwich one day Elizabeth sent for Sir John Spencer, and said: "It was while an attendant in our train that my young

Lord Compton first saw thy daughter, and the issue was the rash marriage which thou deplorest. Sir John, we would remedy the evil thou hast sustained." The face of Sir John became flushed, and kneeling down he said: "I hope your Majesty does not mean to lay your commands on me to pardon." The Queen interrupted him, "Listen to us, Sir John Spencer," she said, "your paternal resentment will be respected by us. It is a favour which we have now to require of thee, and the granting of which may partly remedy the misfortune which you have suffered," and she goes on to tell him the story of a babe whose mother, on account of her marriage, had been cruelly treated by her father, and expressed a wish that he, having no son himself, should stand as godfather to the child, and allow his surname Spencer to be used as the Christian name of the child. To this he consented, and when shown the child he was delighted when he found his prospective godson such a beautiful boy, and at once offered to adopt the child as his own son. The Queen caused a curtain to be drawn, from behind which his daughter and Compton came forward and begged his forgiveness. "I do forgive the past," said Sir John, "and thank her Majesty who has brought about this happy event." This child, Spencer Compton, became the second Earl of Northampton, and the defender of Charles I.

In 1606 Sir John Spencer purchased of Sir Edward Stanhope, Knight, the Rectory Church and parsonage of St. Helen's, and to this possession may be added the Manors of Brooke Hall, Bower Hall, and Bocking, all three of which the Queen had conferred upon him in the year 1603. He died at an advanced age on the 30th March, 1609, and was buried in the Church of St. Helen's. It is said that some thousands attended his funeral in mourning cloaks and gowns, and amongst the number were 320 poor men, to each of whom was presented a basket containing a black gown, four pounds of beef, two loaves of bread, a bottle of wine, a candlestick, a pound of candles, two saucers, two spoons, a black pudding, a pair of gloves, six herrings, six sprats, and two eggs. He further bequeathed £20,000 to his poor relations.

The Mansion with the Rectory descended to William, Lord Compton, afterwards first Earl of Northampton, in right of his wife Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Sir John. It is believed

that Compton, finding himself suddenly possessed of untold wealth, was temporarily deprived of his senses.

Lady Compton was quite able to hold her own when she became possessed of her father's wealth, if we may judge by the letter addressed by her to her "Lord and Master." She therein tells him what she personally needed in the way of money, beginning with £1,600 a year paid quarterly, £600 a year for charity, £8,000 for jewels, in addition to £6,000 for a pearl chain, besides a further list for many costly requirements as to coaches, horses, servants, and £1,000 more than she asked for, etc.



MARY SIDNEY, Countess of Pembroke.

(From an engraving by W. T. Fry, after Gerards)

CHAPTER VIII

THE EARLS OF NORTHAMPTON, COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE, WILLIAM
RUSSELL, AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY
1609—1642

THE first notice of Lord Compton's possession occurs in July, 1609, when he and his son Spencer Compton, purchased of persons named Mashan and Coppin, two of the four messuages retained by the widow of Germain Cioll when he disposed of the estate to Alderman Bond, and which had, on her death, reverted to these two parties by Deed of Feoffment, but whether Lord Compton actually resided here is rendered doubtful by a lease made in the year 1615—just six years later—letting the place for a term of 21 years at the very considerable rent of £200 to William Russell, son of William, Lord Russell, and grandson of Francis, Earl of Bedford. In the lease it is stated that the "capital messuage or Mansion House, called Crosby House" was "then or late in the tenure of the Dowager Countess of Pembroke."

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE

If Compton lived there at all, then it must have been for a very short time, for the Countess of Pembroke's tenancy falls between the death of Sir John Spencer in 1609 and the year 1615. Pembroke House in Aldersgate Street, the town residence of the Pembrokes, was then being used for another purpose, and Crosby House offered a fit lodging for this lady. Little or nothing is known of her tenancy. Her husband, Henry Herbert, second Earl of Pembroke, had died in 1601. But the opportunity here offers of considering the probabilities as to whether Shakespeare ever set foot in Crosby

Place. That he must have known its exterior as well as any man knows his own dwelling house is certain, for he lived for some time in the precinct of St. Helen's Priory, and it lay upon his main route from his house to the Globe Theatre on Bankside. The authority for Shakespeare's Bishopsgate dwelling-house is the Rev. Joseph Hunter, who, in his "Illustrations of the Life, Studies and Writings of Shakespeare" shows by an assessment roll for levying subsidies, bearing date October 1st, in the fortieth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1598), that one William Shakespeare was at that time one of the inhabitants of the Parish of St. Helen's, and consequently a near neighbour to the Hall which either he or his namesake has immortalized. He says that the name of Shakespeare appears in connection with that of Sir John Spencer with the sum of £5 13s. 4d. the assessment against the poet's name, and that the document gives the names of his neighbours, among whom we find Dr. Richard Taylor, Dr. Peter Turner, Dr. Edward Jordan, all well-known physicians; Dr. Cullimore, Robert Honeywood, and the heads of the wealthy families of Read and Robinson. The record referred to, is an assessment under a Commission for a lay subsidy upon the inhabitants of London, the subdivision of this particular record being the assessment upon the inhabitants of St. Helen's Parish, within the Ward of Bishopsgate. I have it upon the authority of Mr. T. F. Ordish that the assessment made upon Shakespeare was not £5 13s. 4d., but 13s. 4d., in respect of property valued at £5. It is, of course, not absolutely certain that the William Shakespeare referred to was the poet, but all the considerations lead to that conclusion, which is accepted by the majority of Shakespearians. Kerape, Burbage and Shakespeare in co-operation had built the Globe in 1598, where their company, under the title of "The King's Servants," played from that time onwards. We have already referred to the three mentions of Crosby Place by name in the text of "Richard III." which introductions show a certain fondness for the place. He was not likely to forget, either, that his best "source" when working upon that tragedy had been the book of a former tenant of Crosby Place, Sir Thomas More's "History of Richard the Third." One must also bear in mind that the customs of the time made for personal relationship and full access almost anywhere. He could have seen



SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

(From an engraving by H. Robinson after Sir A. More)

the place, either privately or publicly, during the progress of the many embassies and feasts, had he wished, and there can be little doubt that he availed himself of the opportunities. But the tenancy of the Countess Pembroke offers further reason for accepting him as a visitor, not merely casually and publicly, but frequently and privately. So few are the existing buildings we know him to have entered, that those who have written pages of conjecture to enquire "Was Shakespeare ever in Scotland?" based upon no more evidence than the fidelity of the Scotch topography and atmosphere in "Macbeth," need not grudge a little space to enquire more curiously into his relations with the family of this lady.

Mary Sidney, then, who possessed in herself qualifications bright enough to have rendered her name famous, and to have added dignity and ornament to the most illustrious blood, enjoyed also the proud distinction of being sister to Sir Philip Sidney. Her son William Herbert, afterwards the third Earl of Pembroke, came to Court and became the friend of the Earl of Southampton, who was Shakespeare's patron and best friend, and so Shakespeare became the personal friend of young William Herbert, from the year 1599 onwards. Herbert turned moodily away from Queen Elizabeth's favours, and his brilliant prospects at Court, to fall in love with Sidney's old love, Lady Rich, and, with a few omissions, Sonnets 127 to 154 are Shakespeare's advice, remonstrances, and reflections of these events. My point is that Shakespeare must have been often in Herbert's company, more particularly upon visits to his mother, whose interest in her son's misguided passion was doubly keen. The dates allow of this, for Shakespeare did not settle down at Stratford until 1611, and frequently visited London up to the year 1614. But the Countess of Pembroke had other than vicarious attractions. She had considerable poetical genius, as is evidenced by the fact that she suggested and amended her brother's work, called by him in gratitude "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia," and was all her life the patron of men of genius. She wrote an elegy on Sir Philip Sidney, which is printed in Spenser's "Astrophel," and a pastoral dialogue in praise of Astrea, but as a poet she was much spoiled by the adulation of a small tribe of hungry wits. Samuel Daniel, the poet laureate, had been her son Herbert's tutor, and he, together with Nicholas Breton

and Ben Jonson, is known to have been under considerable obligation to her. All three were alive during her tenancy of Crosby House, and it is certain that the combined attractions of friendliness and guineas brought them there to her, and also many other of the poets of the time, whose heads were richer than their purses. She died at her house in Aldersgate Street on the 25th September, 1621. In her early youth Edmund Spenser—her brother's friend—had sketched her as Urania in his "Colin Clout," describing her as

"The gentlest shepherdess that liv'd that day
And most resembling, both in shape and spirit,
Her brother dear."

It is almost certain that she was the "Delia" of Daniel's poems, and Ben Jonson has immortalized her name in the following epitaph:—

"Underneath this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,—
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother.
Death, ere thou hast slain another,
Learn'd and fair and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee."

During the tenancy of William Russell, a fleeting glimpse is afforded by the "Calendar of State Papers" of the visit, in March, 1618, of two Russian ambassadors who were lodged at Crosby Place. They came to raise a sum of £60,000 from the London merchants, and were bidden to appear before King James, but were prevented by some indistinct point of etiquette from going unless accompanied by the Council. They went to see the tilting, with which they were much pleased, as well as with the London crowds that flocked about them in the neighbourhood of Crosby Place.

There is another scrap of news given by a letter dated 30th July, 1618, from Sir Robert Naunton, in which the attention of the Lord Mayor and City authority is drawn to "a confluence of loose people about Crosby House, upon a conventicle of Anabaptists there assembled."

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

The next long tenancy takes us into the presence of the most romantic and adventurous company of traders in England—the East India Company—and that, too, at a most important period of their development. The independent ventures of individual and

allied merchants, held together not by common capital but by rules and regulations only, gave place, in 1613, to a stockholding arrangement on modern lines. In the next four years the shares rose to the value of 203 per cent., and a new subscription being opened, a capital of a million and a half was subscribed. The Company therefore looked about them for larger London premises, and found them at Crosby Place, into which they moved in 1621, remaining there until 1638. Previously, from 1600 to 1621, their offices had been at Sir Thomas Smyth's house, in the parish of St. Benet Gracechurch.

Holding a charter direct from the Crown, the Company increased in power and riches, extending its operations to Java, Sumatra, Celebes, Siam, the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, and the states of the Mogul. The directors of the Company were men of high standing in the City of London, "Christian men, jealous of their honour as merchants of so great a city, and careful of their merchantly carriage." In the Church of St. Martin Outwich, which formerly stood at the corner of Threadneedle Street, immediately opposite the southern end of Crosby's mansion, there was a monument to a leading actor in the promotion of these trading companies. Upon the monument was inscribed :

"Here resteth the body of the Worshipful Mr. Richard Staple,
 "elected Alderman of this City in 1584. He was the greatest merchant
 "in his time; the chiefest actor in the discovery of the trade of Turkey
 "and East India; a humble man in prosperity . . . bountiful to
 "the poor; an upright dealer in the world, &c."

In the "Calendar of State Papers" (Colonial Series) there are many references to charitable grants made by the Company to poor preachers in England, and later they established trials of preachers, by means of a sermon on a text chosen by the Company at one of their court meetings, and preached before the Company at their parish church. The rector of St. Helen's in 1618 was the Rev. Dr. Wood, and he became their chaplain, and commenced a system of preaching on board the Company's ships before they started on their long voyages.

The rent they paid during this tenancy was £100 per annum, but when they returned there for a second term, from 1678 to 1702, they paid £160 per annum. Many letters survive dated from, or

mentioning Crosby House during the period, relating to the piracies the Company's ships suffered, and requesting "letters of reprisal on the Grand Signor's subjects"; letters relating to provisions, "200 hogsheads of Irish beef expected very shortly," etc., etc. Of more interest are these items extracted from the State papers:—

September 20–22, 1626. Ordered that the tax imposed upon Crosby House for setting forth the ships by the City be paid.

September 12, 1627. Ordered that the turret and other decayed places of Crosby House be forthwith repaired.

March 5, 1628. Report of the Deputy-Governor of the great danger of fire which they had escaped at Crosby House, wherein all are bound to acknowledge God's great mercy for the timely discovery and prevention of the fearful disaster which might have happened; Mr. Carter, the surveyor, to view the chimneys of the counting house, that their defects may be amended.

August 6–13, 1630. The Company's joiners to make a new chair of wainscot for John Spiller, porter, to stand at the gate of Crosby House, and to oil it to preserve it from the weather, and to give him 14 or 15 deals to floor a room at Crosby House which he is to use as a kitchen.

December 3, 1630. Requests of Edward Collins, the powder maker, that the saltpetre that he receives may first be tried at Crosby House, so that the loss in refining may be more easily judged.

February 4–11, 1631. Ordered that the kitchen chimneys at Crosby House be taken down, and new ones built.

March 30, 1631. The stone warehouse at Crosby House, which is much decayed, to be forthwith repaired.

October 10, 1632. Examination of (*sic*) revealing the intended plot for robbing Crosby House, the Bridge House, and a house in Lime Street read by Sir Hugh Hammersley, therefore Mr. Treasurer was entreated to strengthen the Treasury where most weak, so Blunt and Spiller were required to cause strong locks and bolts to be set upon the doors and gates of the outward and inward yards, and to be always provided with pistols ready charged to withstand any attempt at night.

May 10–20, 1633. Report of Alderman Abdi that he hath been informed of a purpose in the Earl of Northampton to resume Crosby House into his hands at the expiration of the Company's lease, which will be within four or five years, whereupon he is intreated, or any other of the Committees known to his Lordship, to acquaint him with this report and know his answer, that so the Company may prepare and settle themselves accordingly.

September 16, 1633. Disposure of the "James'" goods deferred till she be moored at Erith; and for displacing the master and purser, and better discovery of private trade, and what is become of the estates of those men that died in the ship, whereof they could receive no



SPENCER COMPTON, 2nd Earl of Northampton.

(From an engraving by H. Robinson)

certainty from Barry, Capt. Styles and Mr. Mun intreated to meet the "James" before her arrival at Erith, break open Barry's cabin, and seize all his books, papers, trunks and goods, and cause them to be brought to Crosby House, the court undertaking to save them harmless in respect of this act, which the secretary was required to subscribe and deliver to them for their warrant.

November 20, 1633. Report of Alderman Garwaie that he and Alderman Abdi find Lord Northampton willing to hearken to their motion for renewing the Company's lease in Crosby House, but expected a round sum by way of fine; ordered that their old lease be found out, which would be a guide to proportion the like offer, but left it wholly to their discretion to do as they shall think fit.

So, though more important things be lost, we know that the Company made its own gunpowder, and that they were troubled by the private trading of the officers of their ships, but especially are preserved the precious items that in 1631 the stone floor was worn out, and that, in 1630, John Spiller, porter at the gate, was to have a new chair of wainscot.

For about twenty-five years, counting the two tenures, Crosby Place was the ganglion of this great Company, housing its accounts, money, and directors of affairs, playing its part in that great drama, which began with two or three desperate little ships, and ended, after nearly three centuries of work and fighting, with Disraeli's bending before Queen Victoria with the nation's gift of the title of "Empress of India."

SPENCER, 2ND EARL OF NORTHAMPTON

William Compton, the first Earl of Northampton, died June 14th, 1630, and Crosby Place, with eight of the original messuages descended to his son Spencer Compton, second Earl of Northampton, who appears to have resided there some short time between the years 1638 and 1642. In any event it could not have exceeded four years, for the reason that Russell's lease did not expire until 1636, and in the year 1638 it was still held by the East India Company. That the 2nd Earl, however, was residing at Crosby place with Lady Mary, his wife—daughter of Sir Henry Beaumont—in November, 1638, is clearly proved by a curious deed of that date as showing the manner in which the New River Company transacted its business, and the terms upon which it was prepared to supply Crosby Place with water. Instead of the present system of paying for the use of water based upon the

assessment, a lease of a pipe containing the water was granted. The Indenture made between the Governor and Company of the New River and the Right Honourable Spencer, Earl of Northampton, is to the effect that the Company, in consideration of £3 paid in the name of a fine or income, did demise and grant unto the Earl and Lady Mary his wife a quill or branch of lead containing half-an-inch of water or thereabouts, to be laid from the main pipe in Great St. Helen's, and from thence to be conveyed to the quill by two smaller swan-necked cocks into the kitchen and washhouse of Crosby House, at the Earl's own cost. To hold the said branch and water course for the term of 21 years, and if the Earl and his Lady should use the water "not otherwise than they then did for greater expenses of water, at the yearly rent of £4 payable quarterly." There are also covenants in the deed as to quiet enjoyment, inspection by the Company's officers, wastage, "re-entry" if the rent should be unpaid fourteen days after it became due, alteration of pipe or water course, and the giving of water to persons not already paying rent for the Company's supply.

The Earl of Northampton was a most highly accomplished man, and so peculiarly distinguished for his extensive knowledge of almost all the languages of Europe that in his youth his services were generally used in the reception and audiences of foreign ambassadors. At the age of 15 he was chosen one of the Knights of the Bath at the creation of Charles, Prince of Wales in 1616, and we find him in the small party selected to attend that Prince on his romantic journey to Madrid to woo the Infanta of Spain, where he was employed to deliver the rich presents made by his Royal master to the Spanish ministers and courtiers. He was Master of the Robes in the household of Charles after his accession to the throne, chosen probably because Charles and Northampton had conceived for each other an entire friendship. From the very dawn of the Civil War Lord Northampton supported the Royal cause with the most active and unvarying zeal. He attended the King in 1639 against the Scottish rebels, and in 1642 he was in the great council of the peers at York, and encouraged to the utmost of his power the declarations which they there published in assertion of their own loyalty and of their earnest inclination to compose all the differences fairly and legally.

The Earl deemed it advisable to lease Crosby House, seeing that the City of London stood firm in its support of Parliament. He was one of the stoutest adherents of the King, rallying to his cause immediately the war broke out. He was prominent at the famous raising of the standard at Nottingham; he distinguished himself at Edge Hill, and followed up various successes by raising the siege of Stafford. He afterwards marched out of Stafford and found his opponents on a small plain—Hopton Heath. In two furious charges he totally cleared the field of cavalry, with the loss to the rebels of between four and five hundred in killed, wounded and prisoners. In the second charge Northampton's horse was killed under him, and he was left in the power of the enemy. As soon as he had risen to his feet he killed a Colonel of Infantry who was advancing to seize him. A moment after his helmet was beaten off by the butt end of a musket, and as soon as he was recognised he was assailed on all sides, and, having received in the same instant a deep wound on his face and another from a halbert on the back of his head, he fell lifeless. There is extant a letter of his, dated from York, 14th June, 1642, to his wife at Crosby Place, in which he says :—

“We hear of Mr. Pym's motion for searching our houses. I hope
 “you have taken care he shall not find much at Crosby House, and for
 “the future we shall take such order that the searching of our country
 “houses will be in little danger. Take care that your coach horses be
 “not appointed for the militia.”—*Calendar of State Papers*, 1641–43.

CHAPTER IX

ALDERMAN SIR JOHN LANGHAM, STEPHEN LANGHAM,
PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE,
1642—1831

IN 1642 we find Alderman Sir John Langham in possession under a lease of that date for 99 years, the fee simple remaining with the Northampton family. Sir John, who was a Turkey merchant, was the son of Henry de Langham, and was born in 1584. He acquired a large estate, but not greater than he needed for the bestowal of his generosity and charity. On the 16th January, 1642, Langham was elected Alderman for Portsoken ward, but when the customary oath was administered before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen on the 1st of February, he refused to take it, and was committed to Newgate accordingly. He was no sooner the tenant of Crosby Place than trouble began preliminary to the Civil War, and the mansion which had seen so much brilliance, was in a few weeks destined to witness a gloomy change, for while he was holding the office of Sheriff, on October 29, 1642, Crosby Place, like many another of our fine old mansions, was converted into a sort of prison for Royalists, designated "malignants," under which term were included all who had continued steadfast to the King and had refused to contribute money for the service of Parliament. Eminent Royalists from among the clergy and laity, to the number of 37, including at least three members of the City of London Corporation (Alderman Sir W. Acton, Sir George Whitmore and Sir J. Cordell) and Sir Kenelm Digby, Captain Beale, Sir John Jacobs, and Roger Pettiward, found in the rooms of this house a prison, with its attendant severities, while their estates

were sequestrated by Parliament to provide means for protecting the City and carrying on the war. That the house was used for the purpose mentioned is clearly proved by an order of the House of Commons, with the concurrence of the House of Lords, dated 7th December, 1642.

“ A message was brought from the House of Commons by Sir Henry Vane, Jun., which consisted of divers particulars wherein “ they desire their Lordships’ concurrence. 1st.—To desire their “ Lordships’ concurrence with them, that the Lord Mayor and “ Sheriffs of London might have power to remove ten persons which “ are imprisoned in Crosby House, to Gresham College, in London.” *Lords’ Journal, 7th December, 1642.*

Sir John Langham, although a Presbyterian, was much attached to the Royal family, so that it is difficult to imagine him giving up his house for such a purpose without protest, but whether he was attached to the cause of the King before 1642 is difficult to say, for Clarendon speaks of him as actively uniting, in the year 1642, with Isaac Pennington (Lord Mayor) and Andrews (his brother Sheriff) in a measure that was clearly in favour of the Parliamentarians, viz., the raising of money to support the army in opposition to the Sovereign. Five years later he was one of those Aldermen associated with the Lord Mayor in the charge of threatening the Commons with force, and raising a fresh war, by refusing to raise the loan of £50,000 demanded by Parliament for the army. The committee appointed to investigate the “ outrage ” upon Parliament reported that they had sufficient evidence for impeachment of Sir John Gayer (Mayor), Thomas Cullum (Sheriff), and three Aldermen, James Bunce, John Langham, and Thomas Adams. The House at once accepted the Committee’s report, and ordered the accused parties to the Tower of London. This occurred on the 24th September, 1647. Six months or more had now passed since Langham and his brother Aldermen had been committed to prison, and at length articles of impeachment were drawn up by the Commons and sent up to the Lords on the 15th April, charging them with having “ maliciously and traitorously plotted and endeavoured with open force to compel the Lords and Commons to alter the laws and ordinances by Parliament established for the safety and weal of the realm.” The prisoners appeared before the Lords to hear their several charges read, and were ordered to kneel at the Bar as delinquents, but Langham and

his companions in trouble refused to do this. They were therefore fined, and again sent to the Tower, where they remained until June, 1648, when the Commons, fearing to alienate the City at that time of crisis, procured their discharge. Then again, for refusing to publish "An Act for the exheredation of the Royal line, the abolishment of monarchy in the kingdom, and the setting up of a commonwealth," he was, with two others, deprived of his Aldermanry on the 7th April, 1649.

In 1654 he was Member of Parliament for the City of London, and for Southwark in 1660. On April 4th, 1660, and while at Breda, Charles II. issued a declaration to the effect that he offered a general pardon to all except those specially exempted by Parliament, and promised liberty of conscience in matters of religion. A month later Langham was one of the sixteen Commissioners appointed to wait upon the King at The Hague "to invite him to take possession of the three kingdoms," and with the others received the honour of Knighthood. Seeing that Sir John Langham had contributed very largely towards the support of the Royal family during their exile, it was only natural that the King should bestow upon Sir John some fresh dignity, which came in the shape of a Baronetcy by letters patent on the 17th June, 1660.

It will be remembered that Sir John Langham had been deprived of his Aldermanry some eleven years earlier (1649), but, at the expressed wish of the King, he was again declared an Alderman of the City, and asked to take upon himself the duties of that office; but at his advanced age, being in his 78th year, he wrote from Crosby Place to the Aldermen asking to be excused. He had been, he said, laid aside twelve years earlier, and imprisoned in the Tower by an order of Parliament, chiefly to prevent him from being chosen Lord Mayor, and had been released in the following June without an effort being made on his part.

"In 1662 he became the farmer of the Rectory of St. Helen's, and
"filed a bill in Chancery against Sir John Lawrence, then Lord
"Mayor, and others, parishioners of Great St. Helen's, setting forth
"that he was entitled to some certain rate or customary payment
"of tithes in the City of London of 2s. 9d. for every 20s. rent
"confirmed by Act of Parliament, 37 Henry VIII. but that the
"defendants had combined and refused to pay any tithes or any
"other customary payment, although they had often been requested
"in a friendly manner. It was decreed that the defendants shall

“pay the several sums of money, according to the several rates
 “and customary payments, and shall continue the payment for so
 “long as the said plaintiff shall continue Impropiator of the said
 “Rectory.”—*Cox's Annals of St. Helen's.*

Langham's generosity extended in all directions, but it will suffice to give a few examples, as they relate to London. He settled £25 per annum on Christ's Hospital for placing out yearly six poor children of that house. He gave £590 towards the rebuilding of churches and public edifices which had been consumed by the Great Fire of London, as well as to those who suffered by that dreadful conflagration. In 1670 he gave for the use of the poor of St. Helen's the sum of £100, to be kept in his executors' hands, to be distributed to twenty of the poorest families or widows of the “best name and fframe by 20s. a-piece every St. Thomas's day, for the next five years after my decease.” He died at Crosby House, 13th May, 1671, in the 88th year of his age.

SIR STEPHEN LANGHAM

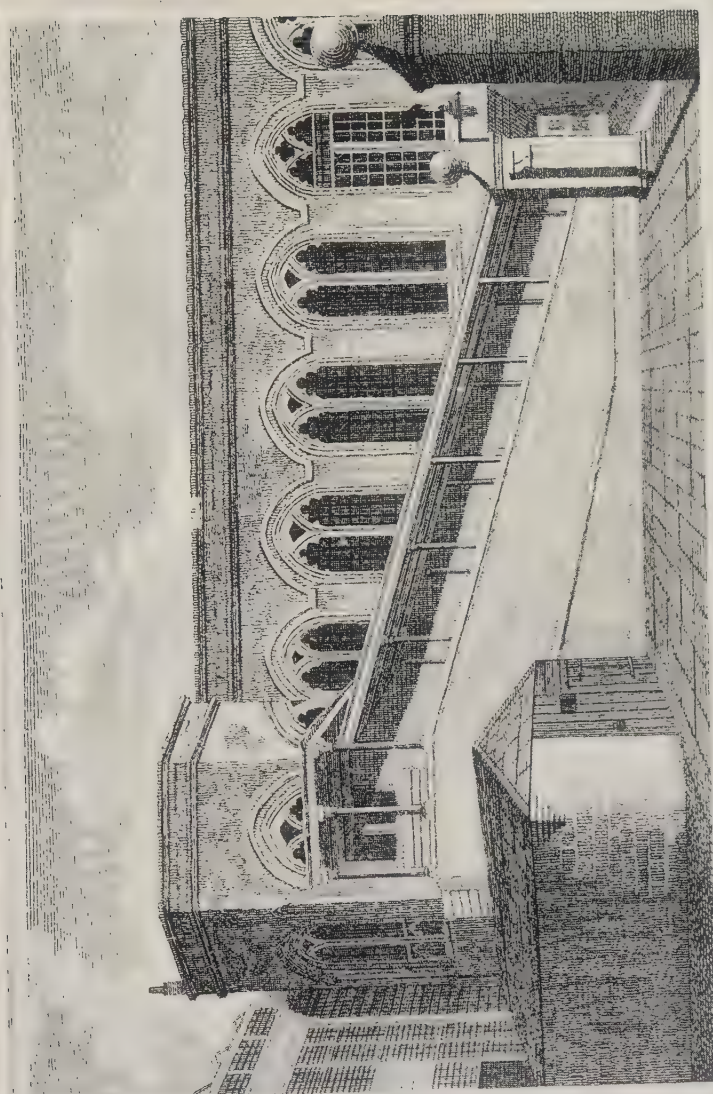
After Sir John's death the lease passed into the hands of his son Sir Stephen Langham, under the Earl of Northampton, who held the freehold until 1678. In 1674 Sir Stephen let to Edward Pelling, clerk, for one year the tithes of the rectory of St. Helen's at 20s., reserving to himself, his children or family free burial place in any part of the chancel of St. Helen's Church, and several pews in the chancel for the use of those who might, during the time of his lease, occupy Crosby House. Edward Pelling was to officiate as Cure and perform the ministerial offices, and repair the chancel of the church.

To what extent Crosby Place was damaged by the successive fires of the middle 17th century is not exactly known, but it is probable that the fire which is represented to have destroyed the greater part of the fine old mansion occurred in the year 1672. It is believed that the Banqueting Hall remained uninjured, which happily was the case at the time of the Great Fire of 1666, which extended its ravages to Leadenhall, stopping in its northward movement just short of the south side and passing in a westerly direction. In 1674 a dwelling-house adjoining the Hall was a victim to the flames and burned down, but the grand old Hall a third time escaped. After the fire it was never again used

as a private residence; kings, great merchants, mayors and ambassadors knew it no more. Its prime was passed and it was condemned henceforward to work for its maintenance, and at times to work very meanly.

In 1672 the Hall was first appropriated for a Presbyterian meeting house, but with this matter I shall deal later. I might say, however, that in order to accommodate these meetings a floor was inserted on a level with the Minstrels' Gallery, and a staircase was erected, ascending on the west side of the building and leading through an entrance cut through the wall close to the oriel, the place being distinctly observable even to-day. At this time it was unencumbered with the second floor, which was inserted afterwards.

In 1676 Sir Stephen Langham let the ground floor of the great Hall to one Granado Chester, a grocer, who used it as a warehouse, and two years later he sub-let Crosby Place to William Freeman, who almost immediately (1678) let "Crosbye's Place"—described as then in the occupation of the said Granado Chester—to Thomas Goodinge, Esq., Sir Stephen still retaining the interest in the leasehold until 1692. The lease to Thomas Goodinge gives the first intimation that houses called Crosby Square were erected upon the site of portions of the destroyed Crosby Place, and upon the gardens and other parts of the edifice, for business purposes. The extent of the property so employed is described as "All that warehouse, then in the occupation of Granado Chester, being part of the then lately divided great Hall, which said warehouse extended from the passage leading out of Bishopsgate Street unto the new Square of buildings there, called Crosby's Square, backwards as far as Great St. Helen's, as well as the little room at the north end." The other parcels of the grant were the rooms, formerly the ante-room, and Council Chamber of the mansion, the former of which was also then used as a warehouse, and in the occupation of the "Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies," and the latter being described as "The great room or Chamber lying over the said great warehouse in occupation of the said Company, belonging to and parcel of the great Mansion House or tenement then, or late, called or known by the name of Crosbye's Place theretofore in the tenure of Sir John Langham."



Crosby Hall when used as a Presbyterian Meeting House.
1672-1769.

(From an engraving by E. Shurt)

A room at the south side of the Hall, over the passage leading to the Square is also mentioned, and the little room at the north-east corner of the ante-room is said to have been "then newly enclosed with brickwork" and also in the occupation of the East India Company. This is the second tenancy of the East India Company as mentioned earlier, from 1621-1638, at £160 per annum.

The fee simple of Crosby Place remained with the Northampton family, when, in 1678, James, the third Earl, sold the freehold to Edward Cranfield and his family, who held it until 1692. About this time was established at Crosby House "The Grand Office of the Penny Post." In "The Mercury; or Advertisements concerning trade," of the 16th May, 1678, the following proof of this is obtained. It states that:—

"At Crosby House in Bishopsgate Street, where the late General Post Office was kept, there will be held a sale of a very considerable quantity of goods, lately belonging to a person deceased."

So that it appears to have been used as a public auction room. The Post Office did not long occupy the building, for in Joyce's "History of the Post Office," page 39, I find that "The General Post Office, until lately in Bishopsgate Street, stood at this time (1680) in Leadenhall Street."

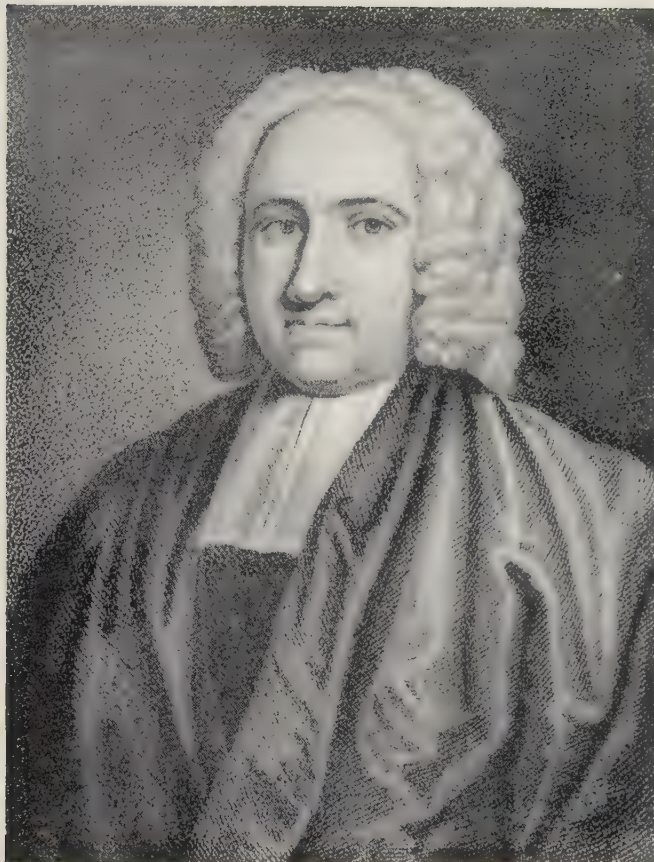
No. 8, Crosby Square, the house adjoining the southern end of the Hall, was built in this year by one Edward Martin, plasterer, as well as one in part of the yard by John Rossington, and another on the site of the present No. 28, Bishopsgate Within. In 1683 the house at the north end of the Hall was erected on part of the "pleasaunce" or "void piece of land" described in the lease to Sir John Crosby as "abutting on the Priory Close." As I have already stated, Sir Stephen Langham retained his leasehold interest in Crosby Place until 1692, when he sold his remaining term of 47 years to William Freeman, who was at that time negotiating for the purchase of the freehold and subsequently did buy the fee simple of Crosby Place, eight messuages, and the Rectory from the Cranfield family. In 1722 we find Crosby Square occupied by stabling and haylofts, while a privilege was held by the tenants of such houses as were there already built, to lay dung in such parts of the Square as were assigned for that purpose. So late as 1752 a cistern is mentioned as standing for watering horses, which

would almost fix a later date to the completion of the Square than that assigned by Strype. In 1756 Sambrooke Freeman, Esq., let to "Joseph South and others, for 17 years, the Hall Throne Room," and "free egress up and down the back stairs" leading out of St. Helen's into the "said Hall Throne Room and galleries thereto belonging." This must refer to what we know as the Council Chamber.

The "most large warehouse," which was built by Sir John Spencer during his tenancy of Crosby Place, and reached by the old gateway at the south-east corner of Crosby Square, was used by the Honourable East India Company between the years 1760 and 1768, as a baggage warehouse, and for the reception of contraband goods, where sales took place at stated intervals. This warehouse was afterwards converted into a Jewish Synagogue.

PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE

Among the many associations of old London, those which hang round the dissenting meeting-houses of the 17th and 18th centuries are not the least interesting. The dissenting chapels at this period were much more numerous than is generally supposed, but through altered circumstances they have, with one exception—The Rev. Thomas Grear's church in Bishopsgate Street Without—disappeared after their vanished congregations. The first religious society assembling in Crosby Hall was collected soon after the Act of Uniformity proclaimed by Charles II., and it is not improbable that to the fact of the Hall being appropriated to a religious purpose, it is owing that the work of demolition and destruction was for a considerable period arrested. The premises were hired by the eminent Presbyterian divine Thomas Watson, who, in 1662, was ejected from St. Stephen's, Walbrook, for nonconformity. He owed much to Sir John Langham, who was, until he died, one of the staunchest friends of nonconformity, and to whose son, Stephen, Crosby Hall belonged. Watson succeeded in bringing together a very flourishing congregation. He had been in the habit of preaching as opportunity afforded, privately or otherwise, during the ten years of his banishment from his parish pulpit. He possessed a very tender conscience, and, evidently believing in the divine right of kings, he sided with Charles I. in the civil wars, and in the time of the Commonwealth he got into trouble through

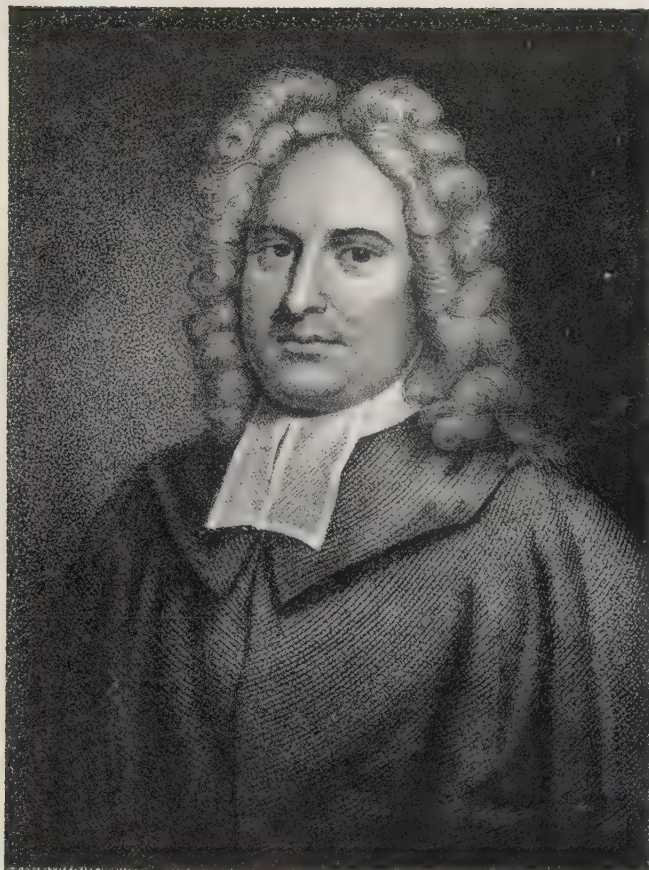


BENJAMIN GROSVENOR, D.D.

(From an engraving by Hopwood, after Pickersgill)

being mixed up in a conspiracy to bring Charles II. to the throne. He was one of the batch of divines who were imprisoned by Cromwell in the Tower upon this account. Watson was accounted a good scholar and a successful preacher in his day, and was admired by a large circle of friends. He was the author of some 24 works of a religious character; one of these, "Heaven taken by storm," published in 1669, was afterwards the instrument of Colonel Gardiner's conversion, another being "Sermons preached before the Lord Mayor on Public occasions." Watson continued pastor at Crosby Hall till, finding his strength failing him, he resigned. Three years after Watson had established himself at Crosby Hall, he secured the assistance of an even more illustrious man, and in 1675 Stephen Charnocke entered upon his duties as joint pastor. He took up his residence with a tradesman in Whitechapel, and in an apartment of this glazier's house he commenced his profound discourses on "The Existence and Attributes of God," which he did not live to complete. These discourses, however, with other works, were published after his death. His "Discourses on Divine Providence," containing an account of his life and character, was published in 1680. He died on the 27th July, 1680, and his remains were conveyed from his lodgings in Whitechapel to the meeting house in Crosby Hall, and from thence to St. Michael's, Cornhill, where they were buried; John Johnson preaching the funeral sermon. Mr. Stephen Charnocke was succeeded in that year by Samuel Slater, son of the originator of the Weigh House Society in Little Eastcheap, and who was ejected from St. Katherine's-by-the-Tower for not subscribing to the Act of Uniformity. Mr. Slater continued at Crosby Hall until his death, which occurred on May 24th, 1704, after 24 years of successful labour. Of all the ministers who occupied the pulpit at Crosby Hall during the 97 years of work there, particulars are not obtainable, but upon being ejected from Roughton, in Norfolk, John Reynolds came to London, and was selected to fill the office of joint pastor with Mr. Slater, at Crosby Hall, where he remained until his death in 1691. He was one of the few who waited upon King James to present an address of thanks for his Proclamation of Indulgence in 1687. Daniel Alexander, also one of Samuel Slater's assistants, was stationed at

Crosby Hall for 12 years (1693-1704) when he resigned owing to some difficulty arising among the congregation. The meeting house attained its zenith of popularity under the pastorate of Benjamin Keach's pupil, the eminent Dr. Benjamin Grosvenor, author and divine, whose term of office extended from 1704 to 1749. He soon raised the church to a flourishing state, filling it with a rich and influential congregation. He was celebrated as a preacher, and in his day commanded great respect from the orthodox dissenters. His work became so heavy that he had to find an assistant, and the offer of the joint pastorate first fell upon Dr. Samuel Wright, who remained in that position from 1705 to 1708. After Dr. Wright's removal to Blackfriars, John Barker succeeded to the office of assistant, and in 1714 he removed to Hackney; then the Rev. Clerk Oldsworth assisted until his death in 1726, and was followed by Edmund Calamy, who laboured here from 1726 until Dr. Grosvenor's resignation in 1749. It was during this period, 1730, that the University of Edinburgh conferred upon Mr. Grosvenor the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Shortly after this, in consequence of his illness and infirmity, the interest of the congregation gradually declined; nor did the preaching of Dr. Hodge, who had accepted the invitation to follow him at Crosby Hall, succeed in bringing about a revival of its prosperity. Upon Dr. Hodge resigning his pastoral relations, the Rev. Richard Jones was invited to accept the office, with the expressed feeling of the congregation that the gatherings would revive under his ministry; but he was no more successful than his predecessor, and the Society, finding the congregation gradually dwindling away, agreed not only to give up the lease, but to themselves dissolve, the few remaining members joining other societies. The farewell discourse was delivered by Mr. Jones on October 1st, 1769. Mr. Jones' last sermon preached at Crosby Hall has been printed and a copy is to be found in the British Museum. Shortly after the dissolution of the Presbyterian Society the meeting house was taken by the well-known dissenting minister, Mr. James Relly, who preached here to a Society of his own formation. He was said to see visions, and upon the strength of these he founded a sect called Rellyans, Rellites, Rellyanists, or Rellyan Universalists, but upon the death of Relly in 1778 the meetings terminated.



SAMUEL WRIGHT, D.D.

(From an engraving by Hopwood, after Pickersgill)



THE BANQUETING HALL
as a packer's warehouse, in 1800.

(From an engraving by J. Storer)

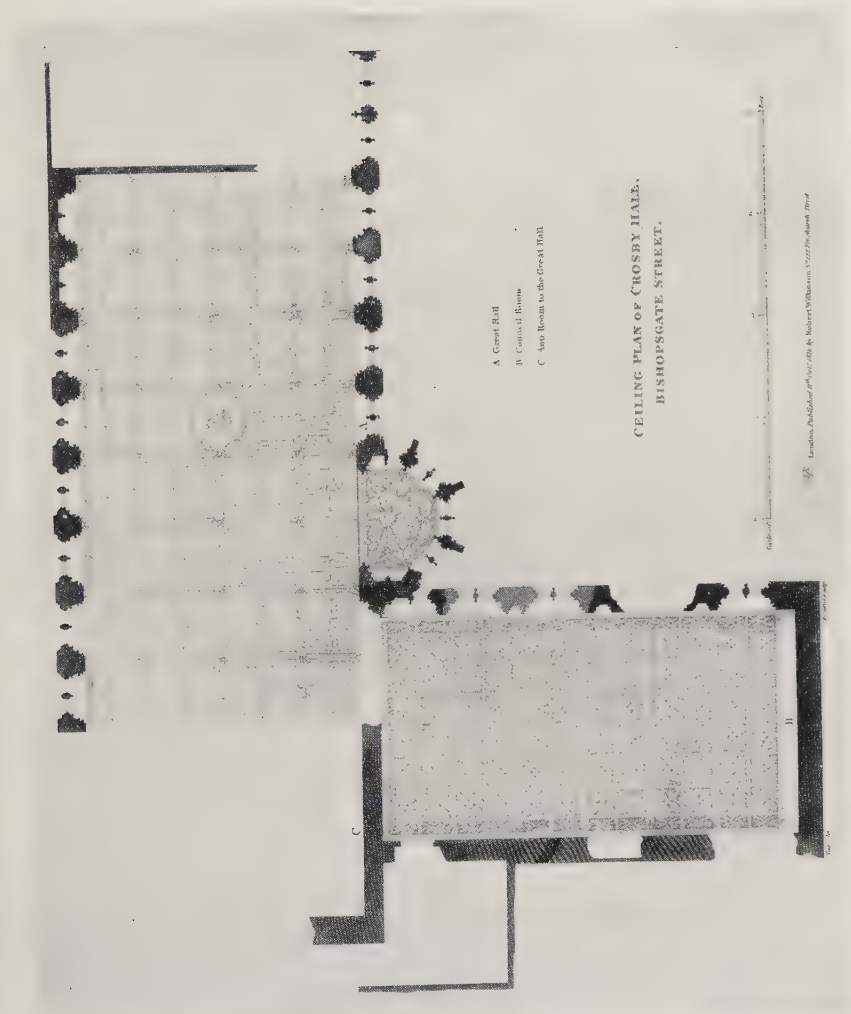
One might say that Sir John Langham was the last resident of Crosby Place, and once its lordly possessors forsook the Hall, this venerable building gradually sank to its lowest state of neglect and humiliation. So degraded had it become, that, in the eyes of the owners, it was pronounced incapable of substantial repair, and only suitable for a warehouse. Until this time, many fragments of glass adorned and beautified several of the windows, but they were accidentally broken and given away to antiquarian visitors who occasionally investigated the place.

MESSRS. HOLMES AND HALL

To the packing firm, Messrs. Holmes & Hall, who secured the lease of the place in 1778, considerations of use were above everything else, and in addition to the floor at the level of the Minstrels' Gallery, erected just before the Hall was used as a meeting house, another floor was now inserted just below the corbels supporting the roof, and this part of the Hall used as a warehouse. Messrs. Holmes & Hall, in 1810, obtained a lease of the entire fabric, and during their tenancy, many other alterations in the interior of the once splendid Hall were made, to adapt the place to the requirements of their business, and some unnecessary injury was inflicted on the ante-room and Council Chamber, causing more damage to the grand old pile than it had suffered during the whole period of its existence. The lower portion, or ante-room, of the west wing was converted into private dwellings, while the upper room or Council Chamber, filled up with ponderous machinery, was used by Messrs. Holmes & Hall as a place for heating large iron plates to press calamancos, affording a striking contrast to its elegant appearance of former times. It is said that the bayed window on the south side of the Council room was taken down to form a staircase to the adjoining dwelling house, No. 1, Crosby Square, then the residence of Mr. Hall, and afterwards in the occupation of Mr. Pasche, of Pasche & Co., merchants, while the ceilings of both rooms have shared a similar fate, though it is probable that for their excellence and artistic beauty they continue to adorn some unknown private house. The fortunes of one ceiling, a finely carved specimen, are traceable. It became the property of Mr. Yarnold of Great St. Helen's, and, upon the sale

of his collection in 1825, it was purchased by Mr. Cottingham, the architect, who fitted it as the ceiling of his Elizabethan museum, at No. 43, Waterloo Bridge Road, and upon the dispersion of his collection in 1851, it formed lot No. 291, at the sale by Messrs. Foster & Son, and was purchased by Mr. Waleaby, 5, Waterloo Place. There is some satisfaction in knowing that the ceiling has been preserved, and that it may some day, by the generosity of the present owner, be placed in the South Kensington Museum, where it may be inspected by all interested persons.

Early in 1816, this once beautiful Council Chamber was denuded of its ornamental masonry by order of the proprietor, Mr. Strickland Freeman, who removed the material to his seat at Fawley Court, Bucks, and there erected a dairy with it. Before the Hall was disencumbered of its intermediate floors, it was possible, by means of the upper floor of the warehouse, to make a very close inspection of the elaborate carved work of the roof, which in places was richly gilt. The facility of access thus afforded to the roof by means of the modern floors, tempted some relic mongers and others to purloin from several of the open quatrefoils of the carved cornice the fanciful and varied rosettes with which they were filled. The outer roof was decayed, and that portion of it near the oriel window appeared very dilapidated, and the purpose for which the Hall was appropriated, if continued much longer, was calculated to accelerate the hand of time in the work of almost unheeded destruction.



Ceiling Plan of the Banqueting Hall and Council Chamber.

(From an engraving by Bourne, after Nash)



Crosby Hall during the tenancy of Messrs. Holmes & Hall, 1804.

(From an engraving by Storer)

CHAPTER X

RESTORATION. MISS HACKETT. LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE.

MESSRS. H. R. WILLIAMS & Co.

1831-1867

THE edifice remained in the hands of Messrs. Holmes and Hall till the year 1831, when, on the expiration of that firm's time, the premises became untenanted, and fell rapidly into a state of dilapidation. A placard was posted, advertising the premises to be let on a building lease—in other words it was proposed to pull them down and sell the old materials to erect modern houses on the site—and there is every reason to believe that in a year or so, every vestige of the interesting fabric would have been swept away, and the ground otherwise built over, had it not been for the enthusiasm of a few neighbouring families. “On the eve of demolition,” says Mr. Kemp, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, May, 1832, “threatened on all sides like many other venerable foundations to be swept away by the spring tide of reformation and improvement, or at least of the devastating principle so called, Crosby Hall has been fortunate enough to find in an intelligent literary lady, a timely and energetic protection.” There were not wanting zealous friends of the structure anxious to co-operate in preserving the mansion. Attention was called to the historical interest and architectural beauty of the Hall, and several public-spirited gentlemen, principally of local families, anxious to avert such loss and discredit, came forward and rescued it from demolition by making an appeal on behalf of a structure which, they pointed out, was a national treasure, and should be preserved for all time. This appeal met with a hearty response, and a meeting was subsequently held at the London Tavern on

Tuesday, the 8th May, 1831, the Alderman of the Ward occupying the Chair. At this meeting it was resolved unanimously :—

(a) That it is highly expedient to preserve from destruction that rare and beautiful specimen of domestic architecture of the 15th century.

(b) That subscriptions be invited for the purpose of defraying the expense of the necessary repairs.

(c) That a Committee be formed with full authority to carry into effect the necessary arrangements.

(d) That Octavius Wigram, Esq., act as Treasurer.

(e) That Samuel James Capper, Esq., act as Hon. Secretary.

The Preservation Committee issued a printed circular, which ran ;—

“ The chief celebrity of Crosby Hall has resulted from its rare architectural beauties. . . . Some of the most striking features of its magnificent and graceful style have been adopted in various modern edifices. Beautiful, however, as may be the borrowed excellencies of recent imitations, the original will always retain an interest in the sight of the antiquary, and in the estimation of the man of taste, which a copy can never possess. . . . A committee has been formed, and a subscription has been opened, with a spirit that promises a satisfactory result. . . . It is only by cherishing such specimens of pure and refined taste as are within the reach of public observation, that one can direct the attention of the people to the beauty and the excellency which they would otherwise pass by without notice, regarding with equal indifference the faultless model or the incongruous deformity.”

A very representative Committee was secured to promote the object the originators had in view :—

Rev. James Blenkarne,	William Cotton, F.S.A.
Vicar of St. Helen's.	Benjamin Cotton.
Sir Wm. Blizard, F.R.S., F.S.A.	C. Wentworth Dilke.
Edward Blore, F.S.A.	William Etty, R.A.
J. C. Buckler.	Alderman Charles Farebrother.
Rev. C. Parr Burney, D.D.	Rt. Hon. Lord Grenville, F.S.A.
Hon. Col. Sir Edward Cust, M.P.	Hon. Thomas Grenville, F.S.A.
Hon. and Rev. H. C. Cust, F.S.A.	Sir Stephen R. Glynne, Bart.
George Capper.	John Gage, F.S.A.
John Capper.	Thomas Greenaway.
S. J. Capper.	Edward Greenaway.
E. J. Carlos.	Rev. W. Hale Hale, D.C.L.
Francis Chantrey, R.A., F.R.S.	Jeremiah Harman.
Alderman W. T. Copeland, M.P.	William Hawes.

Edward Hawkins.	Thomas Poynder.
J. B. Heath.	John Rickman, M.A., F.R.S.
Sir Robert H. Inglis, Bart., M.P.	Robert Routledge.
William Jones.	Rev. John Russell, D.D.
A. J. Kempe, F.S.A.	Sir James Shaw, Bart.
J. H. Markland, F.S.A.	Anthony Salvin, F.S.A.
Marquis of Northampton, F.R.S.	Thomas Saunders, F.S.A.
Lord Nugent, M.P., F.S.A.	George Smith.
J. B. Nichols, F.S.A.	Alderman W. Thompson, M.P.
John Gough Nichols.	William Tite.
G. L. Olding.	Francis Townsend.
George Philips.	Charles H. Turner, F.R.S.
H. Patten.	William Twopeny, F.S.A.
William Petrie, F.S.A.	Money Wigram.
John Pirie (Sheriff).	Octavius Wigram.
Thomas Ponton, F.S.A.	Rev. Samuel Wix, M.A.
John Clarke Powell.	

The following is a transcription of the Minute Book of the Preservation Sub-Committee, presented to the Governors of the Bishopsgate Foundation, by Lieut.-Col. Sir Horatio David Davies, K.C.M.G., Alderman of the Ward of Bishopsgate :—

PRESERVATION OF CROSBY HALL.

“ At a meeting of the Sub-Committee [March 11th 1832]

“ Present: Mr. Saunders,
Mr. Jones,
Mr. Greenaway,
Mr. Cotton.”

“ The Committee after taking a view of the Hall and Council Chamber and the two Houses in Bishopsgate Street with Mr. Barnett and Mr. Smith It was suggested that the Committee might proceed with the Hall and as the Council Chamber could not be applied to the use of the Houses in Bishopsgate Street without determining on rebuilding the Houses which should not be attempted until the Houses were out of lease, It was proposed that the parties taking the Hall should have the option of taking the Council Chamber and the frontage at a fair ground rent and Mr. Smith was requested to consider on what terms he would propose to let the frontage and the Council Chamber on a building lease at the expiration of three years.

“ Read and confirmed

“ 18 March 1832.

“ (signed) W. COTTON.”

“ At a meeting of the Sub-Committee [March 18th 1832]

“ Present: Mr. Jones,
Mr. Greenaway,
Mr. W. Cotton.”

“ Mr. Barnett attended and produced a letter from Mr. Smith

" estimating the rental of the frontage and Council Chamber at £90 per annum.

" RESOLVED that Mr. Blore be requested to furnish the Committee with his opinion as to the best means of preserving and restoring the Hall and Council Chamber having reference to the communication with Bishopsgate Street and that he be requested to confer with Mr. George Smith the Surveyor of the estate on the subject and also to recommend the order in which the work should be proceeded with."

" Extract of a letter from Mr. Smith.

" The frontage of the two houses in Bishopsgate Street appears to be 23 feet 4 inches to which I should give a depth of 40 feet, supposing the premises to be rebuilt. I consider this plot to be of the value of £70 p. annum. There will then be left a plot of ground of about 20 feet by 22 feet, and which I estimate at £15 per annum, to which is to be added the old materials, say £5 p. annum, making together with £60 from the Hall a gross rental of £150 p. annum."

" At a meeting of the Committee

" Present: Mr. Jones

Mr. W. Cotton

Mr. Saunders

Mr. O. Wigram."

" Mr. Barnett and Mr. Smith attended and explained that the frontage of the two houses nearly corresponded with the width of the Council Chamber and that consequently the proposed depth could be given to nearly all the frontage.

" The rental of £60 per annum to include the Hall vestibule and staircase and vaults under, the rent to commence on Lady day 1834.

" The rental of £90 per annum to include the two houses No. 32 and 33 Bishopsgate Street and the Council Chamber and vaults under to commence [no date given].

" That the above arrangements be recommended to the next general meeting of the Committee.

" The Committee to have the use of the Council Chamber free of rent until both the Houses towards Bishopsgate Street are out of lease.

" Mr. Smith undertook to give notice to Mr. Jacob to remove out of the Garret. The open space between the Hall and Mr. Alston's house to be included in the lease to the Committee with a right away (*sic*) to the tenant of No. 9 or the landlord shall covenant to preserve the same open space for the free use of the tenants of the Hall and No. 9 covenanting that no building whatever shall be ever erected upon it."

A subscription list was opened for the purpose of securing the Hall upon a lease equal, in point of possession, to a freehold, and in order to apply the Hall to some public purpose, and to ensure a convenient access from Bishopsgate Street, a separate

treaty was entered upon for a lease of the Throne Room and Council Chamber, and two small shops in Bishopsgate Street, abutting thereon. The mansion was in the possession of William Freeman, Esq., the grandson and heir of Admiral Williams Freeman, and in September, 1833, the impediments to the restoration of the place were removed, as Mr. Freeman attained his majority, and granted a new lease to the Committee for 99 years; but to-day we have reason to deplore the fact that the Committee did not then secure the freehold, for although public sentiment was running very high, that sentiment would not have been imposed upon as it has been to-day. The Committee immediately entered into contracts for the repairs, and the work of restoring the venerable fabric proceeded apace under the direction of E. Blore, Esq., F.S.A. Messrs. Ruddle and Clarke contracted to do the repairs to the Great Hall for the sum of £728. In the meantime the Gresham Committee and the Mercers' Company were approached with a view to arriving at some arrangement whereby Crosby Hall might be appropriated to the use of the Gresham lecturers, but unfortunately the proposal fell to the ground. Negotiations were then opened with The Choral Harmonists' Society, who promised to take the lease of Crosby Hall and to finish the Great Hall agreeably to the designs of Mr. Davies, architect, but these negotiations were also unsuccessful. The amount needed for restoration was about £2,000, but up to January, 1833, only £700 had been collected by the Committee, and with a view to securing greater support, it was suggested that the Hall should be secured as a depository for the Guildhall collection, as well as other metropolitan collections of antiquities, and such specimens of art as would claim a place in a museum of national interest—fine portions of Gothic sculpture, armour, Celtic and Romano-British relics, etc. A second subscription list was also opened for the completion of the repairs, towards which the Alderman of the Ward, W. T. Copeland, Esq., M.P., gave £100.

After the neglect of nearly two centuries it seemed as if the threatened ruin would be effectually averted, for the Restoration Committee had repaired the Great Hall, removed the floors which encumbered it, and had completely restored the elegant oriel, which, perhaps, exceeds in beauty of design, if not in

magnitude, the oriels on either side the dais at Eltham Palace. Its windows were filled with appropriate coats and badges designed by Mr. Thomas Willement, F.S.A., and those which flank the upper portion of the Hall adorned with the bearings of the subscribers to the restoration, but in March, 1835, the funds at the disposal of the Committee being exhausted, there was danger, apparently, of the work of restoration remaining incomplete. It was then (1835) that Miss Maria Hackett, of 8, Crosby Square, whose name will never be forgotten in connection with Crosby Hall, came forward and proposed to take a lease of the premises with all the clauses, covenants and options contained therein, and to uphold the fabric according to the terms of the lease and the resolution of the Committee, so as to preserve its ancient character, and to carry into effect the engagements of the Committee by making an entrance from Bishopsgate Street, and again to offer the Hall, at a moderate annual rental, to the Gresham Committee for the use of the lecturers under the will of Sir Thomas Gresham ; or to appropriate the same to some other public object or objects connected with science, literature, or the arts. Miss Hackett further agreed to discharge all the outstanding liabilities and debts incurred by the Committee in the execution of their trust beyond the amount of the subscriptions. This proposal was considered and accepted by the Committee, and thus devolved upon Miss Hackett the further carrying out of the anxious wish of all parties, that Crosby Hall might be restored to its pristine beauty and devoted to some useful public object. This lady aroused the sleeping energies of some of the antiquarians of that day, and with admirable public spirit and good taste continued the work of restoration. By public meetings, under the presidency of Alderman Copeland, the sum of £1,500 was collected, and on Monday, the 27th June, 1836, the Right Hon. William Taylor Copeland, M.P., Lord Mayor of London, and Alderman of Bishopsgate Ward, laid the first stone of the new works of the so-called Council Chamber and Throne Room, and forming the north boundary of the outer court. The Mayor was assisted by the members of the Committee and the Master and Wardens of the Grocers' Company, and Mr. E. L. Blackburn, architect, of whose "Architectural History of Crosby Place" I have made much use.

A sealed bottle was deposited by the Lord Mayor's eldest son in a cavity formed in the stone, in which bottle were enclosed the architectural plans, the reports of the Restoration Committee, a list of subscribers, and the following inscription in gold letters on vellum :—

The north wall of this quadrangle
was rebuilt on the original foundation

A.D. MDCCCXXXVI.

The first stone of the new work was laid
on Monday, June xxvii., by the
Right Hon. William Taylor Copeland, M.P.,
Lord Mayor of London.

At the ceremony the Lord Mayor, in his speech, gave a brief account of Crosby Place, and of its successive occupants, at the conclusion of which he expressed a wish that the building might subsequently be used for the purpose of the lectures founded by Sir Thomas Gresham in the same parish and within a few yards of the same spot. His lordship then led the way into the Great Hall, where a banquet in the Elizabethan style was provided; the floor was strewn with rushes as of old, the Royal Standard and the banners of St. George and of the City were in the place of the ancient arras or tapestry round the walls, intermingled, here and there, with branches of laurel. A baron of beef, duly decorated with banners and pennons—national, civic and domestic—supplied the place of the “boar’s head enarmed” of ancient days. The function was prolonged by vocal and instrumental music until the early evening. Two drawings were exhibited in the Hall, one by Mr. E. L. Blackburn, of the Council Chamber in its original state with the citizens of London offering the Crown to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the other, by Mr. Davies, of the interior of the Great Hall, with Sir Thomas More introducing Holbein to Henry VIII. Shortly after the ceremony an announcement was made that an honorary premium of ten guineas would be awarded in October, 1836, for the best essay on the “Life and institutions of the English legislator Offa, King of Mercia,” and in October, 1837, a like premium for the best essay on the “Life and Times of Robert Baron Fitzwalter, Castellan of London in the Reign of King John.” While the works were in progress the Hall was let occa-

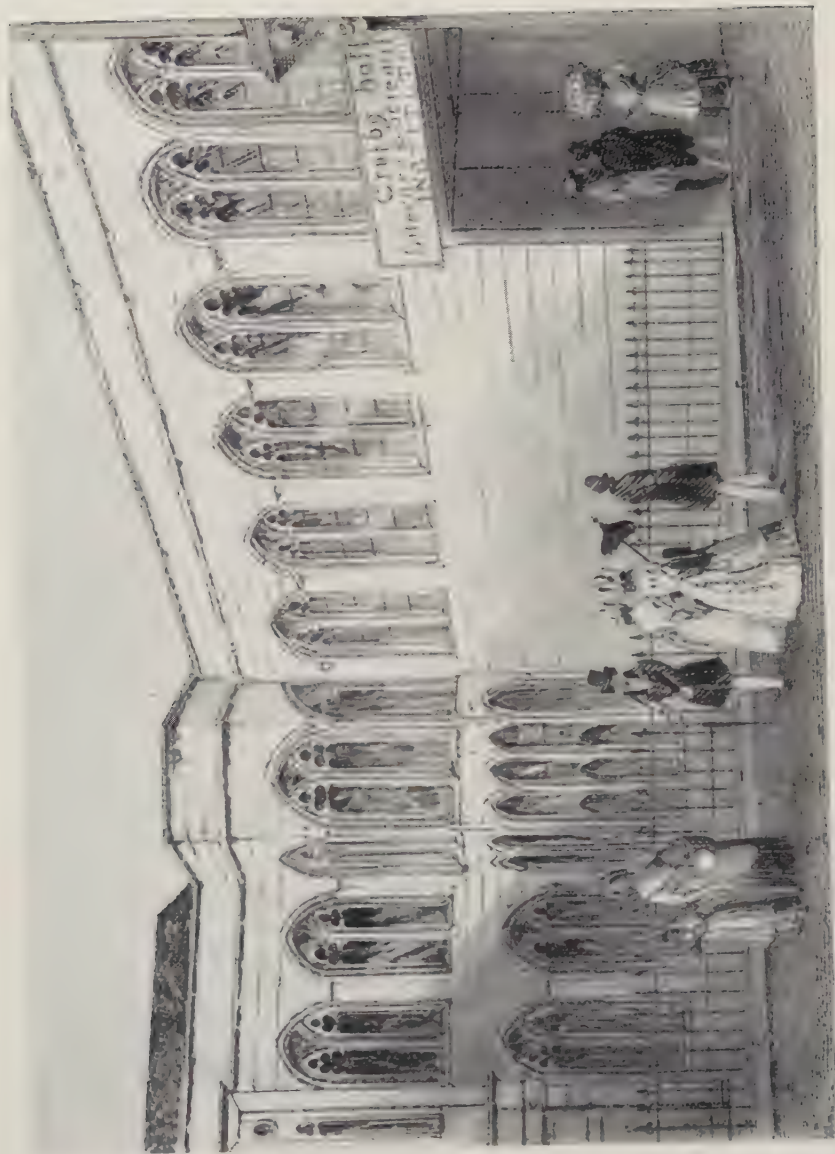
sionally for benevolent purposes. In the "Memoirs of Baron Bunsen," under March 1st, 1839, is found the following note:—

" Fetched by Lady Raffles and Ella to Crosby Hall in Bishopsgate Street, to see Mrs. Fry, who was presiding over a bazaar of works and books, to be sold for the benefit of female prisoners and convicts."

This, of course, is the famous Elizabeth Fry, to whom we owe the reform of our penal system.

All hope of the realisation of Miss Hackett's most earnest wish, that Crosby Hall should be appropriated to the use of the lecturers under the will of Sir Thomas Gresham, for which she had fought so much, were shattered, and the whole question of the future destiny of the Hall was at length taken up by two or three influential and public-spirited individuals, who formed themselves into a company of proprietors. They purchased Miss Hackett's interest, selected Mr. John Davies, of Devonshire Square, as their architect, and in real earnest set about the completion of the repairs and restoration, with the object of adapting the Hall and premises for the use of the Crosby Hall Literary and scientific Institute. The repairs and restoration, which were completed about 1841, included the north and south terminations of the interior of the Great Hall with screen gallery and organ at the north end; the rebuilding of the south wall of the Throne Room and Council Chamber, with its elegant windows, as well as the two north windows of the same apartment; the fitting of the area of the Hall with raised seats; the substantial repairs to the roof; the entire rebuilding of the apartments at the north end of the Hall; a new stone façade towards Great St. Helen's (known formerly as the Priory Close), from the designs of Mr. Blackburn and Mr. John Davies; also a new front in the style of the timber houses of the period forming an entrance from Bishopsgate Street, but which formed no part of the ancient building, and the restoration of the Council Room and Throne Room—the latter being afterwards occupied by Mr. Dando as a music room. The proprietors and the Committee before them expended upwards of £6,000 on the repairs and restoration.

The restoration of the old Hall was so far successful that the Hall, the Council Chamber and the Throne Room assumed, however faultily, something of their original character. It was reopened



CROSBY HALL occupied by the Literary and Scientific Institution,
1842-1848.

by Alderman W. T. Copeland, M.P., on the 27th July, 1842, with a public dinner, served in the old English style. Except for the Throne Room, which was used as a music room by Mr. Dando, the entire place was occupied by the Crosby Hall Literary and scientific Institute, under the praiseworthy direction of the Rev. Charles Mackenzie, and Mr. J. D. White, Secretary, but this had a speedy death. Six years later, in 1848, the Congregational Board of Education, which originated at the Derby conference, wishing that the sentiments of the Board on the educational system should be propounded fully, and in a permanent form, arranged for a course of lectures to be delivered at Crosby Hall under the direction of the Board. These lectures have been published in book form under the title of "Crosby Hall Lectures on Education." At the same time, the Rev. Charles Mackenzie, assisted by the Rev. R. Whittington, rented Crosby Hall for the purpose of establishing there the Metropolitan Evening Classes for young men in London, one of which was for debates and discussion. The object of this institution was to supply for the City the much-needed public library, reading-room, classes and lectures at a moderate price, and to afford the youths of London the comforts of a club, sympathetic friendship, rational education, and sound moral training.

On the 2nd March, 1852, the Prince Consort visited Crosby Hall for the purpose of inspecting the operation of these classes, on which occasion he expressed himself much interested in the building, and in September, 1853, an exhibition was held under the Prince Consort's patronage, he sending a large number of most interesting articles for inspection. Under the patronage of His Royal Highness, and the Presidency of the Bishop of London, an annual celebration of these evening classes took place at the London Tavern and other places. In less than five years an aggregate number of 8,360 students attended the classes in the various branches of an English and academic education, and more than 200 popular lectures were given by literary and scientific men interested in the work so well established. During the period the cost of the upkeep of the classes had only been £2,600. In 1860, the classes were removed to Sussex Hall in Leadenhall Street, and subsequently developed into the City of London College, now in White Street, Moorfields, one of the most useful educational institutions of the last

half century. So do great things grow out of small beginnings, and the good work of these two clergymen has prospered and grown, effecting much benefit to numbers of young men who attended the classes, many of whom have since attained celebrity; amongst them Sir Edward Clarke, K.C., and Sir Henry Irving may be mentioned. At first the success of these classes was very doubtful, and great credit is due to the two gentlemen who kept them alive for a period of thirteen years. But debt was incurred, and about the year 1856 the lease was repurchased by the freeholder, to whom belonged most of the adjoining property, in order that he might have the control of the place, in case he should determine upon any enlarged building speculations. After Mr. Dando gave up the tenancy of the Throne Room it was used as a day school, under the direction of Dr. Priestman, and we have with us to-day Mr. R. Harvey Barton, one of the Governors of the Bishopsgate Foundation, who was one of the pupils at the school. In Crosby Hall we may not only be sure that concerts were frequently given, but here some of our greatest song writers have assembled to give and to receive pleasure in the social performance of their own compositions. Both before and during the period the Hall was occupied by the Literary and scientific Institution, concerts were often arranged. A musical performance, in commemoration of Sir Thomas Gresham, was given there on the 12th of July, 1838; and under the patronage of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, an English comedy, with songs and recitations, was performed on three occasions, on the 13th, 15th and 16th of February, 1846, the play bills announcing these performances being printed on silk, a copy of which is preserved at the Bishopsgate Institute. Among the several songs sung there on the latter occasion were, "Bid me discourse," "Where the bee sucks," "Should he upbraid," "Love in idleness," "Over hill, over dale," "The maypole," "Under the walnut tree," &c., &c.

An article appeared in *The Times* of the 22nd April, 1857, referring to exertions then being made to purchase the lease of Crosby Place. To this article the Rev. C. Mackenzie, Hon. Secretary to the Evening Classes, then held at Crosby Hall, replied that it was proposed to raise a sum of six thousand guineas to put the evening classes for young men in a safe and permanent condition,

by paying off the debt accumulated during the nine years of their existence between 1848-1857, and by purchasing a home for them so that they might for the future be self-supporting; but if in the meantime the Hall were sold, there would be the risk of dispersing a well-cemented band of one thousand intelligent and self-improving youths, and abandoning them to the dangerous temptations of a seductive city. If, on the other hand, the building were left in the hands of the trustees for educational purposes, it would be available for kindred societies, and many other uses, much wanted in London—as a trade museum, a mercantile and maritime college, or a middle school for tradesmen's sons. These considerations, in addition to regard for its historical associations and architectural beauty, had induced the attempt to preserve Crosby Place from the hammer of the auctioneer, and retain it for its present tenants; but, should the negotiations for the lease fail, at least a fund would be raised which would form an endowment and set the institution free from rent. To effect this desirable object several eminent statesmen, bishops, merchants and societies promised contributions, the amount of which, with the subscriptions of the young men themselves, approached £2,000.

Six weeks later, however, on the 3rd June, 1857, the property was announced for sale by order of the proprietors, Mr. Thomas Fox being the auctioneer; but the premises do not appear to have been sold, seeing that the freehold remained with the Freeman family until 1871, in which year it was put up at the Auction Mart and bought in at £22,500. The following is a description of the premises as offered for sale in June, 1857:—

“Crosby Place, formerly the palace of King Richard III., being the
 “finest specimen of the architecture of that period in the City of
 “London. The principal frontage, Bishopsgate Street Within, comprises two attractive shops with dwelling houses and lobby entrance
 “leading to well-proportioned Council Chamber, with egress through
 “the postern to private yard to Crosby Square. Ante-room, great
 “Hall of splendid structure 67 ft. by 27 ft., and 40 ft. high. The
 “ceiling is particularly striking for its richness, being elaborately
 “carved in the Gothic style with conical pendants and arches; eleven
 “stained glass windows with stone mullions and elaborate tracery.
 “A magnificent oriel window connected by a lofty arch, highly
 “wrought stone ceiling embellished with bosses of foliage and
 “armorial bearings. The organ loft, gallery and screens, are strictly

" in accordance and of great architectural beauty, and the committee
 " room over entrance to Crosby Square, with extensive frontage.
 " The library is situate on the east side of the entrance from Great
 " St. Helen's, in which there is also a commanding frontage. The
 " upper Council Chamber with oriel Gothic window, magnificent
 " Throne Room—this splendid apartment is 41 ft. long and 23 ft. 4 in.
 " wide, with arched and ornamented ceiling 20 ft. high, and gallery
 " to correspond, five windows with stone mullions enriched with
 " stained glass; robing room, hat and cloak room, water closets, coal
 " cellars, etc. The spacious wine vaults, with arches 27 ft. span,
 " 9 ft. 6 in. high, cover a space of upwards of 2,100 ft. The whole
 " of these extensive and valuable premises are of the most substantial
 " character, with walls of amazing thickness, originally built by the
 " celebrated Sir John Crosby, about the year 1466. Within the last
 " few years about £6,000 has been expended in completing the
 " restoration of this antique palace, which is now in perfect decorative
 " and substantial repair, offering endless attractions to the archi-
 " tectural student and antiquarian. From its central City position,
 " combined with the advantage of three frontages in different
 " directions, each giving an immediate outlook to the colonial, corn,
 " coal, shipping, money, stock and share markets, it is admirably
 " adapted for a commercial exchange, chambers and committee rooms
 " of the most important description. No. 33, Bishopsgate Street, is
 " at present in the occupation of Mrs. Brown, whose tenancy expires
 " at Michaelmas Day next, at the yearly rental of £90. The wine
 " vaults are let on lease to Mr. John Currall for a term of 25 years
 " from Michaelmas, 1853, at £63 per annum. The remaining portion
 " of the property is let to the Rev. Charles Mackenzie, at the nominal
 " rental of £300 per annum, being in part occupied by the Young
 " Men's Evening Classes up to Michaelmas Day next. The whole of
 " the foregoing property is held on lease for an unexpired term of 76
 " years, at the low ground rent of £150 per annum."

From January, 1858 to July, 1859, lectures were delivered in the
 Hall; and among others were Professor Leoné Levi, who lectured
 on "What Science owes to Italy," and Signor Biaggi, on "The
 Fine Arts of Italy" and on "The Life of Michael Angelo." It
 is also interesting to note that in March a presentation was made
 to the Rev. Thomas Hugo, on his appointment as incumbent
 of All Saints. It was the Rev. Thomas Hugo who at that time
 contributed so many valuable papers to the London and Middlesex
 Archæological Society, particularly one on Crosby Hall. Between
 August, 1859, and September, 1861, perhaps as late as 1863,
 the Hall was used for midday united prayer meetings. I have
 before me, at the moment of writing, a little pamphlet, pub-



View of the Banqueting Hall as a storehouse for wines, 1862-1867.

(From an advertisement issued by Messrs. H. R. Williams & Co.)

lished in 1861, entitled: "Prayer answered in the History of Crosby Hall Prayer Meeting," in which are to be found a couple of stanzas "dedicated to the brethren meeting at Crosby Hall, in the spirit of love and gratitude, by R. G. I., who is a frequent attendant." The author of this booklet relates how, after attending meetings at the Wesleyan Centenary Hall for some considerable time, he prayed "that the Lord would open another place at once." He hired a room at the London Tavern for £1 a day as a temporary meeting place. After this his attention was drawn to Crosby Hall, and the Secretary of the Young Men's Classes, which were held there, offered the Throne Room for 10s. a day. The first gathering, which was held on August 8th, at one o'clock, consisted of six persons, which number was increased to twelve on the 9th, and eventually the worshippers were so numerous that a larger room was engaged. Hearing that the Hall was to be sold, the meeting moved in February, 1860, to Sussex Hall and returned to Crosby Hall in September, 1860. On July 24th, 1861, the meeting removed to the Banqueting Hall on the ground floor. These meetings were set on foot by Captain Hawes and, although the expenses connected with them were heavy, and the majority of persons attending the meetings were not in a position to support them in a pecuniary sense, nevertheless the funds came to hand in a manner little short of miraculous.

After the Metropolitan Evening Classes had removed to Sussex Hall, the premises were used for lectures and concerts, and in 1862 it was leased to Messrs. H. R. Williams & Co., the well-known wine merchants, who converted it into a storehouse for wines, which in all the forms of bottle, bin, and cask filled the whole place.

The centre of the Hall was appropriated to long lines of casks of sherry; each side was piled up with large stocks of clarets, Beaujolais and the produce of Hungary; and the large fireplace, with its capacious chimney, was made to accommodate some hundreds of dozens of the "Chancellor's Claret," so called from the mention of Messrs. Williams' wines by Mr. W. E. Gladstone in the House of Commons. The Council Chamber was set apart for wines from Portugal, and the room above, and the galleries, were used for every diversity of the beverage. In their hands, although used for business purposes, the fabric underwent no damaging alterations,

due regard being had to the historical reputation of the Hall and its intrinsic beauty, and to this firm is due much credit for so carefully preserving it from injury.

The fact that the place was appropriated for a wine and spirit warehouse elicited some heated correspondence, in 1862, against this "act of vandalism in converting the most perfect and interesting building into a receptacle for wine after public opinion had rescued it from the degradation to which it had for a long time been condemned," and declaring against the apathy of the public "in handing over the building to the tender mercies of a wine merchant." An attempt was made in this year to raise enough money to purchase the lease of the building so that it might never again be used as a "Presbyterian Meeting House, a packer's warehouse, or a wine merchant's store." It is only fair to Mr. Williams and to Mr. J. H. Lloyd, partners of the firm of Messrs. H. R. Williams and Co., to say that they were not in any sense of the word, "vandals." They had, and showed, great affection for the place, and although ample opportunities were afforded them, they in no way denuded the building of any scrap, by way of contributing to any private collection of antiquities. Mr. J. H. Lloyd, the author of that well-written and very complete "History of Highgate," was sufficiently proven as a lover of London's relics to entirely discredit the charges above referred to.



Front View in Bishopsgate Street (now razed to ground)

CHAPTER XI

MESSRS. F. GORDON & CO.—A RESTAURANT
1868–1907

MESSRS. WILLIAMS & CO. found the place inconvenient, and surrendered their occupation of the premises after some five years. The premises were empty for a few months in 1867, and finally in 1868 they were leased at about £1,000 a year rental to Messrs. F. Gordon & Co., who converted the place into one of the most spacious and best conducted restaurants within the City of London at that time.

For some years the meetings of the Bishopsgate Ward Club had been held at the "Green Dragon," Bishopsgate, but on December 9th, 1868, a committee was appointed to enquire into the question of accommodation for the future meetings of the Club, and on December 23rd the Committee reported that several members, being of opinion that the rooms appropriated to their use at the "Green Dragon" Hotel, were inadequate to the requirements of the Club, proposed that it would be expedient to procure, if possible, apartments of more ample dimensions in which the meetings of the Ward Club should be held. They reported that several members of the Committee on Wednesday, the 16th December, 1868, under the chairmanship of Mr. Robert Barton, waited upon Mr. F. Gordon, one of the proprietors of Crosby Hall, who consented to allow the use of the Throne Room for the meetings of the Club upon the same terms as paid for the use of the rooms in the "Green Dragon" Hotel. Mr. Ingledew, on January 13th, 1869, moved, pursuant to notice, that all future meetings of the Club be held in the Throne Room, and after some opposition on the part of

a few of the members, the Club removed to the Hall on the 10th of February, which was the date of the first meeting there. To celebrate the event, a dinner was held on the 14th April, 1869. The Club continued its meetings there until the 9th October, 1901, when, owing to the exigencies of the business at Crosby Hall, all evening business was relinquished there, and the Club procured accommodation at the "Great Eastern" Hotel. It may be said that everything affecting the welfare of the City, and Bishopsgate in particular, has always been jealously watched by the "Bishopsgate Boys," and it is not too much to say that many improvements have been effected through the influence of the Club with the members of the Corporation representing the Ward.

At the death of the freeholder, Mr. William Peers Freeman, several properties occupying part of the site of the ancient palace, and let at something over £5,000 per annum, were put up for auction by Messrs. Beadel & Co. on the 1st June, 1871. No. 26, Bishopsgate Street, then let on a lease with an unexpired term of four years, at a rent of £400, sold for £8,020. No. 28 fetched £7,000; Nos. 30 and 31, Bishopsgate Street, and the adjoining house, No. 9, Crosby Square, realized £10,500; Lot Nos. 34 and 35, Bishopsgate Street, and No. 5, Great St. Helen's, was knocked down for £10,600; Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8, Crosby Square, were put up separately, and in the aggregate fetched £47,030, No. 7 being bought in at £4,000, while the bidding for No. 29, Bishopsgate Street, reached £4,150, but was not sold. When the Crosby Hall lot, which comprised the Great Banqueting Hall, Throne Room, Council Chamber, vaults, and two shops (Nos. 32 and 33, Bishopsgate Street), was put up, to the great surprise of many, the bidding did not rise beyond £22,500, at which figure the property was declared not sold. Messrs. Frederick Gordon & Co. at this time were still the leaseholders, and during their tenancy had expended a large sum of money in restoring and preserving the building, while adapting it to every-day use as a restaurant, to which, no doubt, persons were pleased to obey the injunction of Shakespeare—"repair to Crosby Place." There had been for some time a fear that the freehold of the building would pass into the hands of those who would appreciate it less, but that danger was averted by Messrs. Gordon & Co. purchasing it early



View from Great St. Helen's.

in 1873 for about £37,000. The purchase included two houses in Bishopsgate Street and one in Great St. Helen's. Under the carefully prepared plans of Messrs. F. & H. Francis, the architects, elaborate and successful restorations were carried out with consummate taste and judgment, and although considerable extensions of the premises were ultimately made, its character and the architectural details of the ancient structure remained unaltered. The whole place was so renovated and embellished that it is questionable whether its original features exceeded the beauty of the Hall as we have known it for some years past. Strange it is that after the lapse of some four centuries, the great Banqueting Hall should have returned to something resembling its original use—to a place where one could comfortably refresh oneself, and indulge in the conjuring up of past scenes before one's mental vision, extending from the "humpbacked" Richard to the ranged desks of the East India Company. The decorations were in perfect keeping with its original use and style, with nothing to offend the taste of the most fastidious. There was a series of well-executed portraits of the Tudors, under whom the ancient City palace was in its greatest glory. The paintings on the walls consisted of portraits of the most eminent occupiers of Crosby Hall, and of several noteworthy events that have taken place within the precincts of Crosby Place; one of the number representing the citizens offering the Crown to Richard of Gloucester, an event which is erroneously said to have taken place in the so-called Throne Room.

Here, then, was a public dining establishment at which City workers might obtain a meal in comfort and even with elegance. In the lobby leading to the dining rooms was the wine office; passing on was the lofty and spacious Council Chamber, entirely devoted to a luncheon and refreshment bar, with the so-called Throne Room above, used for select clients. The Council Chamber was distinguished for the historical paintings which adorned its walls. There were the portraits of Cromwell, Prince Rupert, Earl Stafford, General Monk, Pitt and Fox; representations of Edward IV. entering London, and the coronation of Henry VII. on the Field of Bosworth; with busts of various rulers of England representative of the various Houses: Julius Cæsar, Canute, William I., Edward I., Henry V., Edward IV., Henry VII., Charles I., and

George I. The great Banqueting Hall was used as a general dining room. The smoking room, which was a truly handsome and thoroughly comfortable apartment, was supplied with some of the leading periodicals, and with chess, draughts, etc. The ceiling of the room was divided into panels, containing the badges of England—the rose, portcullis, fleur de lys, and pomegranate, a variation appearing in the ceiling of the recess, where each of the panels was emblazoned with the Garter. The pictures on the walls represented the presentation of the infant Princess Elizabeth to Henry VIII.; Shakespeare reading his plays to Queen Elizabeth; figures of Prince Hal, Falstaff, Sir Walter Raleigh; as well as the twelve signs of the zodiac occupying the spaces between the windows. The stained glass windows of the room contained figures representing Fortitude, Patience, Purity, Justice, Truth, Love, Charity, Victory and Mercy. One of the bay windows was decorated with medallions of the four seasons, and the other with the figure of Dick Whittington, while the recess displayed the figures of Mary Queen of Scots and Lady Jane Grey. There is no doubt that the restoration by Messrs. Gordon & Co., and the long use to which it was put as a restaurant, secured for the Hall a longer life than it would have had, under constantly changing tenancies.



The Great Banqueting Hall, *circa* 1880

(From an original water-colour drawing, by P. L. Staunton, in the possession of the Governors of the Bishopsgate Institute)

CHAPTER XII

CHARTERED BANK OF INDIA, AUSTRALIA AND CHINA. PRESERVATION
COMMITTEE. DEMOLITION OF HALL.

CONCLUSION.

AS a restaurant the Hall continued to be used up to the 31st July, 1907, but some months earlier there had been a whisper that this magnificent relic was in danger. In April the freehold of Crosby Hall was sold for the sum of £175,000 to the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, and it came as no small shock when it was gathered that it was the intention of that Company to pull down the historic building, and to erect upon the site new premises for the purposes of their banking business. Immediately the probable fate became known, the daily and weekly Press was flooded with protests against such an "aggressive act of vandalism," and notwithstanding all the interest thus exhibited, and the influence of the Press, urging the public to intervene and save the Hall, the means were not forthcoming for the purchase of the place. The matter was brought before a meeting of the Court of Common Council by Mr. J. J. Redding moving a reference to the Library Committee to inquire immediately and report what steps were necessary to preserve the building for the nation, as it was positively unique in character. It was suggested in support of the motion, that the building would prove a most suitable site for a City museum. The previous question was moved and carried, and Mr. Redding's motion fell to the ground.

A distinguished deputation on the 14th June, 1907, attended at the Guildhall to present a petition, asking the Corporation to consider the desirability of preserving the Hall. The deputation, which was

headed by Sir Henry Howarth, President of the Royal Archaeological Institute, also included Sir Edward Brabrook (Vice-President), Mr. Philip Norman, F.S.A., Mr. Seymour Lucas, R.A., Dr. Freshfield, Mr. Nigel Bond (of the National Trust), Mr. F. G. Hilton Price, and other representatives of learned societies. The result of the deputation was that the Court of Common Council referred the petition to three of its committees—the Coal and Corn and Finance Committee, the City Lands Committee, and the Library Committee—to take joint action in the matter and report. It was also resolved to refer to the same committees, a letter from the Secretary of the Royal Institute of British Architects, enclosing a copy of a letter addressed by the Council of the Institute to the Chairman of the Chartered Bank of India, calling attention to the great architectural and historical value of the building, and expressing the hope that the vendor and the Directors of the Bank would do all in their power to retain the structure on its original site, irrespective of the Bishopsgate Street frontage; and, should it be impracticable to save the whole building, that the ancient Hall alone might be preserved. The joint committee appointed by the Corporation, obtained an interview with the Directors of the Chartered Bank, with a view to arriving at some arrangement by which the building might be saved. The Directors declined to give up the site which they had purchased, unless another equally convenient could be offered them in exchange. There could be no objection to the position thus taken up by the Directors, and, indeed, one must say that they showed no indecent haste in the work of demolition, but what appeared to be the universal complaint was, that not only were they determined to have their “pound of flesh,” but the blood too. The Directors promised, however, that if it were necessary to demolish the structure, they would cause it to be taken down very carefully, having each stone numbered, and, on the 25th June, they offered the whole of the fabric to the City Corporation for re-erection on some other site, as in the case of Temple Bar, and also to present everything of special antiquity or architectural interest for preservation in the Guildhall Museum, or other suitable institution. The proposal to reconstruct the Hall on another site was considered impracticable, as the Hall would be thus robbed entirely of the

historic associations, which were, one might say, inseparable from the site, and it was also felt that great injury would be done to the beautiful woodwork.

On the 11th July the joint committee reported to the Court that a deputation had had an interview with the Directors of the Bank, and had pointed out the public reasons for the preservation of the building. The Directors, it was reported, had expressed their readiness to accept another site, if the Corporation could offer them one equally eligible for the purposes of the Bank. This the Corporation was unable to do, no other site being then available.

A wooden hoarding was erected round the site of the ancient mansion, and on the 18th September the demolition of part of the structure commenced, by the removal of the quaint timbered façade in Bishopsgate Street (which, if not ancient, was a capital reproduction of the timber houses of the 15th century), and within a few days every trace of the large Dining Parlour, commonly known as the Throne Room and Council Chamber, had been cleared to the very foundations, leaving untouched the great Banqueting Hall—the last scrap of the once extensive Palace. Inside the dirty, dusty hall and adjoining chamber were to be seen, scattered about, ornamental portions of the façade and original stonework, including the massive fireplace, which had been carefully removed from the Council Chamber, and arranged in sections on the floor for reconstruction elsewhere. This work of destruction began in spite of the expressed wish of the King, on August 6th, that means would be found “to preserve such an interesting relic of old London,” and in spite of the efforts of many antiquaries, archæologists and other lovers of London’s historic buildings. Of course banks are commercial institutions, and into the purposes of their business, historical sentiment cannot enter; at any rate, it did not in this instance. The Directors of the Chartered Bank appear to have been most patient in delaying the work of demolition, but it would have paid them very well indeed to have waited even a couple of years at the price asked for the Hall. The sum named was not only an unreasonable one, but it read like an imposition upon the sentiment of the nation. I say unreasonable, because to ask £120,000—two-thirds of the gross cost—for considerably less than one-half the site, and that without

taking into consideration the frontage value as compared with that of the rear, was an unfair proportion of the total cost. The building itself had no value in the minds of the Bank Directors, for since destruction was the intention of the Bank authorities, it must have been quite immaterial to them, whether the site were covered by a magnificent old hall, a stable, a barn, or a private house; therefore it is reasonable to assume that the value of the building was its proportion of land value only. Had the Directors been more modest when asking a price, there can be little doubt that the public appeal would have been successful, and to-day we should have been rich in the possession of a magnificent specimen of Gothic domestic architecture, the last of its kind in London. The rights of property are sacred, and may be pressed even to destruction, but it is nothing short of scandalous, that the building, which carried down to us such memories of learning, magnificence, tribulations, civic work, hospitality, and commerce of four hundred years, should have been swept away in a few weeks because the public would not subscribe the enormous sum of £120,000 to £150,000, the Directors' over-grasping estimate of what public sentiment would produce.

An effort was made to ascertain whether the public-spirited Worshipful Company of Plumbers, the owners of the freehold land adjoining the Crosby Hall site, would be disposed to sell it to the joint committee, in order that it might be offered to the Bank in exchange for the Hall and its site. The Company handsomely agreed to sell, in order to save the grand old building from destruction. Then the consent of the City Corporation was asked, and generously granted, for the closing of the existing entrance to Great St. Helen's, and the opening of a new street further north, so that a continuous frontage could be offered the Bank, which would be of greater value to any commercial house than back premises. Negotiations were at once opened with the leaseholders and tenants for the surrender of their interests, in order that possession of the land might be given the Bank at the earliest date. The Lord Mayor then interested himself and called a public meeting for the 1st October, to be held at the Mansion House, and a provisional committee—afterwards the Preservation Committee—was formed to negotiate with the Directors of the Bank, and devise

a scheme for preserving the Hall. This was followed by the starting of a guarantee fund of £60,000, and 14 days' time was secured from the Bank to mature the movement to save the Hall.

The Preservation Committee comprised the following names:—

Sir T. VEZEY STRONG, *Chairman*, Alderman.

Mr. NIGEL BOND, B.A., Secretary, National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty.

Mr. W. D. CAROE, M.A., F.S.A., Architect to the Ecclesiastical Commission.

Mr. J. W. DOMONEY, C.C., Chairman, City Lands Committee.

Sir WM. H. DUNN, Ex-Sheriff.

Mr. H. A. HARBEN, Chairman, Prudential Assurance Company.

Col. PEARSON, C.B., Vice-President, London and Middlesex Archæological Association.

Mr. ADRIAN POLLOCK, City Remembrancer.

Mr. R. STAPLEY, C.C., Chairman, Epping Forest Committee.

Mr. C. Y. STURGE, M.A., L.C.C., Chairman, Historical Records Sub-Committee of the Local Government, Records and Museums Committee, London County Council.

Mr. W. R. E. COLES, Secretary, Preservation Fund.

Fourteen days after the appointment of the Committee (15th October), the Directors of the Bank agreed to allow another 14 days, in which the Committee might pursue their efforts to obtain the purchase money, but made it a condition that definite arrangements must be made on or before the 29th October.

On the 18th October, the Court of Common Council unanimously resolved to contribute £1,000 towards the fund, at which date the amount subscribed had reached nearly £10,000.

The Preservation Committee, early in November, issued the following appeal to the nation, announcing that £48,000 had been subscribed by persons representing all classes of the community in all parts of the kingdom:—

“ In Crosby Hall the Representatives of the Ancient Guilds and
 “ Modern Associations may meet for the promotion of the social,
 “ commercial and industrial interests of the community, which could
 “ nowhere be so appropriately focussed as in the City of London. The
 “ grand old building may thus be dedicated to present and future
 “ purposes worthy of its great past. It is felt that it would serve a
 “ real need of the present time by providing a centre for the growing
 “ activities of the age, and so furnish another, and perhaps the highest,
 “ practical example of the adaptability of ancient institutions to
 “ modern needs.

“The Preservation Scheme proposes that the freehold land and the famous building shall be secured in trust for permanent public advantage.

“To purchase the land and preserve the old building £120,000 is required. This amount must be obtained by public subscription or guaranteed forthwith.

“The donations from the Guilds and citizens of London and the general public throughout the United Kingdom indicate the widespread interest in the object. About £48,000 has been subscribed within the short time the Provisional Committee has been in existence. But in view of the short time allowed by the Directors of the Chartered Bank to complete the Scheme, a Guarantee Fund is necessary to enable the Committee to close with the Bank.

“In the event of the Preservation Scheme not being carried through all donations will be returned, and any amounts guaranteed would only be drawn upon, *pro rata*, in the event of donations falling short of the required amount at that time.”

Within a few days the amount had reached nearly £50,000, but despite the hopeful position of affairs, and despite the considerable efforts towards the raising of the purchase money, the famous building was still in the greatest danger of destruction. Although the purchase price of the Hall was fixed at £120,000, only £60,000 was immediately required, of which sum all but £10,000 had been subscribed or guaranteed. If this small balance had been all that was needed there would have been little ground for fear. The position, however, was, that the Committee suggested a fair adjustment of the question of the value of the Crosby Hall site and that offered in exchange, and asked for more time to raise a further £10,000, but on the 31st October, the Directors of the Bank refused any further respite, unless by the 14th November they were given a guarantee that they would receive in exchange for Crosby Hall the substituted site, without payment, by the Bank, of the difference between the two values. The site offered to the Bank was about 428 ft. larger than that on which the Hall stood and was free from difficulty as to light and air, whereas Crosby Hall was beset by “ancient lights” and other difficulties. To have agreed to the Bank’s conditions would have really meant making a very substantial present to the Directors out of public subscriptions. Negotiations were broken off, because the Committee could not see the way clear to giving the Directors a guarantee that they should receive, in exchange for Crosby Hall, this larger and certainly more valuable

site, without paying the fair difference in price. The extra 428 ft. would not have been a bad bargain for them, for they could easily have leased it, or have built upon it themselves. Apart from the difference in area of the two sites, there was the question of an extended frontage in the main thoroughfare to be considered, but the Directors were not ready to admit the great advantage to them in the exchange. Fresh efforts were needed, and it was earnestly hoped that the Directors would be compelled to accept the reasonable offer of the Committee. It was suggested that the Corporation should apply for an injunction to restrain the Directors from destroying a building which, over seventy years ago, when similar danger threatened Crosby Hall, had been repaired by public subscription under the covenant of an unexpired lease. It may be strongly contended that the public had, in this manner, secured the right to prevent demolition; but, unfortunately, the legal registration and establishment of the trust thus created in the early part of last century appear to have been neglected, for no deeds can now be found. However, it was felt that the public had a moral right in the Hall, which to a certain extent was public property.

On the 14th November, the Committee informed the Directors that the sum of £50,000 had been subscribed during the previous five weeks, and again asked the Directors to delay any intended operations involving the demolition of the Hall, until the result of a meeting of citizens, to be called by the Lord Mayor, could be ascertained.

The Directors refused to delay operations in the absence of the guarantee asked for, and were unwilling to allow the time for the proposed public meeting, or to accept the Committee's alternative scheme, that the Corporation should build suitable premises on the site offered the Bank in exchange for that of Crosby Hall, and to let such premises on lease to the Bank.

It had frequently been suggested about this time that the annual sum of £8,000 accruing to the City's cash as the Corporation's moiety of the surplus money arising from the Gresham Trust, should be applied to the preservation of the Hall, and that the proceeds of the projected sale of the existing Gresham College building, estimated at £100,000, should be devoted to the purchase of the historic freehold, and provision made for the transfer of

the Gresham Lectures, and other activities, to the restored Hall. The surplus cash derived from the Trust was declared to be absolutely under the control of the City Corporation, and it was thought that by employing the money for the preservation of the remnant of Crosby's Palace, which Sir Thomas Gresham knew so well, and so frequently visited, yet another monument would be established to the memory of the princely merchant, to whose munificence London owes so much. The Preservation Committee used every means to enlist the sympathy of the Gresham Trust, but the appeal fell on stony ground.

By the 3rd December, £60,000 had been subscribed, including £20,000 promised by a lady who wished her name not to be made known, and on that date the Local Government Records and Museums Committee of the London County Council came forward with a suggestion to save the Hall. In the report to the Council, the Committee stated that the negotiations of the joint committee of the Corporation, and the Preservation Committee, having proved unsuccessful, and there being a danger of the demolition of the building commencing almost immediately, the Records and Museums Committee had considered whether it would be possible for the Council as a last resort to make an offer to preserve Crosby Hall, and had, therefore, prepared a scheme which to them appeared well calculated to bring about the desired result. The Committee further stated that the Preservation Fund amounted to about £60,000, while there were indications that the amount would be increased if there were a real chance of success. The Committee suggested that if the sum were transferred to the Council it would be enabled to purchase the whole site, including Crosby Hall, at its fair market value, and be in a position to offer great inducement to a tenant to take the surplus site, and use the Hall for such purposes as it would be available for under agreement with the Council. The consideration to be paid need only be sufficient to cover the cost to the Council involved in the payment of interest on, and repayment of, the purchase money, less £60,000, the debt to be extinguished in 60 years' time, and under such an arrangement no charge would fall upon the county rates. The Committee felt that the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, would not wish to stand in the way of the

Council acquiring the site on these terms, it being understood that the first proposal for the use of the Hall should be made to the Bank, who would also be able to secure the surplus site at no higher price than they had paid for it, and to rent the Hall at a considerable reduction on the commercial value of the site, this reduction enabling them to secure any further accommodation they required without any extra charge to themselves. The Committee understood that the Directors' disinclination to retain the Hall was due to the fact that sufficient use could not be made of it as it stood, to justify the expenditure incurred; but with the assistance of the £60,000 the Council would have been in a position to make an arrangement with the Bank which would get over this difficulty. If, however, the Directors did not see their way to negotiate on these lines, there would still remain other business means of letting the site, and at the same time preserving the Hall. The two conditions under which the scheme would be carried out were:—(1) That the Bank agreed to the acquisition of the property by the Council; and (2) That the Crosby Hall Preservation Committee undertook to transfer to the Council the sum which the public had subscribed towards the preservation of the Hall. The Committee pointed out that were the scheme carried through, at the end of sixty years the Council would possess, on behalf of the public, the Hall free of any encumbrance. During the intervening period the use of the Hall by the public would probably be restricted, but in any case the building would have been saved.

On the 13th December the Board of Trade informed the Records and Museums Committee that the Board were prepared to become the tenant of Crosby Hall, as well as premises suitable for offices in close proximity to it. The intention of the Board of Trade was to house in Crosby Hall the commercial library of the department, which was then practically buried in the vaults of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Board also proposed to attach to the library the Commercial Intelligence Department, located in Basinghall Street, inasmuch as their tenancy of these premises had almost expired and they were already on the look-out for other suitable quarters. The use of the new building for such a purpose, would have given that immediate and permanent public access to the historic building which was required, and would have brought

the library nearer to the centre of commerce ; and by the intelligence which would have been placed at the disposal of shipowners and others, it would have become a real boon to the Baltic, hard by. The proposal seemed for the moment to place matters on a new and more definite basis, and to give promise that something would be arranged by which the Hall would be saved, but, unfortunately, all hopes were too soon dissipated.

The Committee of the London County Council in a further report of the 17th of December, dealing with the negotiations, recommended that the resolution of the 3rd of December be rescinded, so as to leave the Committee free to continue negotiations ; and that the Corporation of the City of London be asked to co-operate with the Council in securing the site of Crosby Hall. The Corporation might well have asked for some justification for the Council's intervention, seeing that they brought no monetary assistance beyond a subscription. This attempt on the part of the Council to insinuate itself into the City, and secure through the praiseworthy efforts of the Preservation Committee and the City Corporation, the control of the last relic of antiquity within the boundaries of the City's jurisdiction, spelt unpardonable meddling in City affairs ; indeed, from the very first, the intervention of the Council was regarded by most City people as a piece of unwarrantable interference, for at no time did the Council appear in real earnest. They afforded no substantial assistance financially, nor did they even put forward any practical suggestion for bringing about the accomplishment of the scheme which the Preservation Committee had set before themselves. Instead of asking to be allowed to co-operate with the Preservation Committee who had already done most of the hard work, the Council conceived the idea of associating themselves, unasked, with a movement which then had every appearance of being successful, and they proceeded in their own sweet blundering way—without deigning to consult either the Corporation, the Preservation Committee or the Bank Directors—to frame an impracticable, if not ludicrous, scheme to purchase the site from the Directors, and afterwards let it to them or some other tenant, who would undertake to preserve the Hall. The £60,000 they expected to be transferred to them by the Preservation Committee they intended to apply to

John Gwyn

per me Thomas More
to save

By me John Cull

per me Johanne Fryer

James Allam

Thomas Allam

2 By me Edmund Cull

William Bond

per me

Northampton

LEASEHOLDERS, AND OCCUPIERS OF CROSBY PLACE.

SIR JOHN CROSBY.

SIR THOMAS MORE. From the Deed of Sale to Antonio Bonvisi, 1524.

THOMAS, LORD DARCY. From the Grant of Old Lease to Bonvisi, 1554.

JOHN CIOLL. From the Deed of Assignment by Germain Cioll to
John Cioll and John Frier, 1561.

JOHN FRYER. From the Deed of Assignment by Germain Cioll to
John Cioll and John Frier, 1561.

JAMES ALTHAM. } From the Deed of Release in favour of Germain
THOMAS ALTHAM. } Cioll, 1561.

GERMAIN CIOLL. From the Deed of Sale to Alderman Bond, 1566.

WILLIAM BONDE. From the Deed of Sale to Sir John Spencer, 1594.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE. From the Counterpart Lease from William,
1st Earl of Northampton, 1609.

EARL NORTHAMPTON. From the Deed of Sale to Edward Cranfield by
James, 3rd Earl of Northampton, 1678.

the reduction of the rent of the Hall, which would, as they generously stated, become the property of the public after a period of sixty years! This report was presented with the full knowledge of the Bank's expressed determination not to relinquish the Banqueting Hall, unless another site of the same value were found, and the only one suitable was that offered by the Preservation Committee. Then came a flourish of trumpets in some of the daily papers announcing "Crosby Hall saved—The County Council to the rescue," with what justification we now know. Had the Bank Directors granted the Preservation Committee the extension of time they at first denied, but which they afterwards conceded to the Corporation and to the County Council, and had the County Council backed up the policy originally advocated by the Preservation Committee instead of confusing the issue by submitting an unworkable scheme, the money had been forthcoming and the Hall saved; at any rate, everything tended that way, but the inconsistent action of the Bank, followed by the intervention of the County Council announcing themselves as the rescuers, had the painful effect of immediately putting a stop to all voluntary effort, and the further flow of subscriptions. If evidence of this is needed, one has but to refer to the subscription list, to find that promised help ceased to be sent immediately after the Council's grandmotherly intermeddling.

The special Sub-Committee of the Council and the Chairman of the Bank Directors met on the 20th December at the Mansion House, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, to further consider the matter. The Chairman of the Directors then repeated most emphatically that the only scheme the Directors were prepared to discuss was that originally formulated by the Preservation Committee, and that the site offered by the Committee, as a substitute for that of Crosby Hall (estimated at £150,000), was the only suitable one for the purpose of the new Bank. This, then, was a complete reply to the ill-conceived plans of the London County Council, who, very characteristically, thought they could dictate terms to the Bank. The Council's lamentable failure, and the consequent cessation of subscriptions, resulted in an announcement being made by Sir Vezey Strong, on the 11th January of this year, that the amount already subscribed would be available for the combined effort then being made to save the Hall, providing the

County Council and the Corporation contributed the required balance of about £100,000. The Council showing no sign of help beyond paper schemes, the Bank Directors, becoming tired of waiting, and restless, announced their determination to demolish the Hall, and even declined to suspend operations pending the result of a public meeting, which the Lord Mayor had agreed to call. This aroused a bitter sense of disappointment in the City when it was known that all the valiant efforts to save such a magnificent possession were likely to prove unavailing.

However, on the 22nd January, a Mansion House meeting resolved, "That application be made to the Prime Minister to receive a deputation for the purpose of urging upon the Government the expediency of applying public moneys to the preservation of Crosby Hall, under the powers conferred by the Ancient Monuments Protection Acts," and in spite of their ultimatum, the Directors consented to hold their hands in the matter of the demolition of the Hall, although the workmen had commenced taking out the windows and pulling down the walls of the north wing, which, however, formed no part of the original Banqueting Hall. The deputation was the one ray of hope left. The Prime Minister delegated to the First Commissioner of Works the reception of the deputation, which Mr. Harcourt fixed for the 27th January.

The Lord Mayor introduced the deputation, composed of representatives of the City Corporation, the London County Council, the Crosby Hall Preservation Committee, and the National Trust for the Preservation of Historic Buildings. He then outlined the position of affairs, pointing out that the only site which the Bank considered suitable as a substitute for that of Crosby Hall would cost £150,000. The Lord Mayor went on to state that in the preliminary negotiations with the Board of Trade, it was estimated that Crosby Hall, with an adjoining property, would have given the necessary floor space, but subsequently the Board stated that they would require not less than 6,800 ft., necessitating the acquisition of further land to meet these requirements. To have acquired the area they desired would have entailed the expenditure of a sum of £206,000, which included rebuilding on a part of the site. Towards this amount it was estimated that

the total contributions received or promised would not be more than £60,000, leaving £146,000 to be found. For the accommodation referred to, the Board of Trade were only prepared to pay £2,720 per annum, which rent was totally inadequate to meet the required sum of £5,840 per annum for interest on the purchase money and for the provision of a sinking fund, leaving a deficiency of £3,120. The Lord Mayor then expressed the hope that the Government would assist the Preservation Committee in securing the Hall, by paying such a rental as would make the acquisition of Crosby Hall and the additional land possible, or to apply public moneys under the powers conferred upon Parliament by the Ancient Monuments Protection Acts, to make up the sum required to preserve Crosby Hall as a national monument.

Mr. Harcourt, though admitting that a considerable amount of public interest had been aroused, regarded Crosby Hall as a metropolitan rather than a national memorial. He reminded the deputation that it had been suggested that the Board of Trade should rent Crosby Hall for 60 years at £3,375. This amount, together with the cost (£1,800) of the accommodation which would be required in addition to that afforded by Crosby Hall, would bring the total annual expenditure up to £5,525, while for their Basinghall Street accommodation they were only paying £2,570. The position of the Board of Trade was quite clear. They were willing to rent the Hall at a fair price, and more than that could not be expected of them. Mr. Harcourt mentioned that he had also to take into consideration the capital expenditure on the work of restoring the building, which would approximate on £9,000. He was afraid, therefore, it was impossible to recommend the proposal to employ public funds for its preservation under the Ancient Monuments Protection Acts, but reminded the deputation that the London County Council were empowered by the Act, to acquire ancient monuments, and suggested that the City of London Corporation might have become the custodians of such a public monument, by means of a provisional order by the Local Government Board. The final appeal was to the Government, and the answer was the death warrant of the famous Crosby Hall.

The contract for its immediate demolition had been signed, and

on the following day, the 28th January, the long-delayed work of destruction commenced in real earnest by those who had, for so long, as it were, been kept at bay, and within three or four hours an ugly gap appeared, giving ample proof that the dismemberment of the hallowed walls would take but a few days. In accordance with the assurance given by the Directors that all the parts would be carefully taken down and numbered, the fabric was removed very slowly, stone by stone, under the direction of Messrs. Gordon and Gunton, architects to the Bank, by Messrs. George Trollope and Sons, and Colls and Sons, and stored at their warehouse at Blackfriars, every precaution being taken against loss or destruction of any of the material. The Directors had been most forbearing, and their final decision to demolish the venerable pile, though regrettable, could not honestly be called in question. Their instructions as to the care of the pieces carted away will at least have earned for them the grateful thanks of all lovers of the once noble edifice.

The whole story of the attempts that have been made to save the building since first it was threatened is most humiliating to those who made such gallant efforts to save the Hall from the fate which overtook it. The question of cost, of course, has been the real crux throughout. Had the sum been half that actually asked, it would have paid the Directors well; as it was, the inflated price at which they estimated the sentiment of the people not only displayed a lack of business acumen, but their relentless attitude cost the City the most precious possession it had within its boundaries—a Palace in which the foundations of the City's wealth and dignity were laid—the memory of which will remain a deep disgrace to London, long after its material has been incorporated in some other building. The result of the appeal, clearly proved that there was a limit to the price which the richest city in the world was prepared to pay, even for a fabric of such genuine historic and antiquarian interest as Crosby Hall.

If Sir T. Vezey Strong and the members of the Preservation Committee, who, working night and day, put forward such vigorous efforts to preserve the City's ancient Palace, were unsuccessful in obtaining the whole amount required, it was not from lack of effort and resource, and it must have been painful to them to find it

necessary to refund the £50,000 with which they had been entrusted. In forwarding the cheques to those who had so handsomely contributed to the Preservation Fund, the Chairman stated that the Committee found the opinion and popular sentiment of all classes of the community very strongly in favour of the preservation of the building. Sir Vezey Strong stated that expert examination of the old structure as it was being taken to pieces, disproved the rumour that the timbers of the roof were "too rotten to stand removal." The Hall was sound, and practically perfect, and would have stood for centuries. Therefore, this needless act of desecration, only proves the urgency of the passing of a law, whereby the nation should be able to purchase at a reasonable cost, for the advantage of future generations, the few remaining memorials of old-world London which may fall into the market. Crosby Hall then, will not have perished in vain if, consequent upon its demolition, there rises some authority for preventing similar acts of vandalism. If instead of spending enormous sums of money in patching up houses of little or no historical interest, in fixing tablets on houses formerly occupied by persons little known to Londoners, in the making of surveys of empty modern houses, in preparing ground plans of London to imperfectly record the ownership of freehold and copyhold properties, and in publishing unnecessary volumes of statistics already printed in other forms, the County Council had applied such moneys to the purchase of what the voices and purses of the people have shown was worth preserving, London might have more reason to applaud their efforts.

Many proposals have been made for the resuscitation of the building. Some were for its re-erection at the Franco-British Exhibition, others for Epping Forest, Letchworth, and Hyde Park; but the three schemes which met with most favour, were those for reconstructing the Hall at Chelsea, Kensington, and Bishopsgate. Professor Geddes was first in the field with a well-conceived and workable scheme, for the utilization of the fabric in connection with a University Hall of residence, to be erected in Cheyne Walk, and a meeting was held on the 23rd March, to consider the suggestion. The site proposed, was that of the garden attached to the residence of Sir Thomas More, where his famous "Utopia" was

completed, a most appropriate spot, considering More's five years' residence in Crosby Hall, and from the fact that the proposed new Hall would thus become the centre of a valuable educational movement, somewhat on the lines of the Toynbee Settlement. Unlike the County Council's abortive scheme, which would have locked up the place for "sixty years," Professor Geddes' proposal was for making it immediately accessible to the general public for lectures and meetings of various kinds, and as a museum for relics illustrative of the life and times of Sir Thomas More.

The County Council, assuming that the Chartered Bank of India had given them the power to dispose of the Crosby Hall material, generously expressed their willingness to accept the ownership of the fabric, conditionally that the Hall be re-erected on land adjoining More House, and that the freehold, together with the Hall, be conveyed to the L.C.C., subject to the right of students to use it for academic purposes, and that no charge fall upon the County rate, in respect of the storage of the fabric, and the erection and maintenance of the new building.

A little later, Kensington followed with a scheme to secure the numbered stones, and to re-erect them under the superintendence of Mr. Belcher in the charming garden of Leighton House. The features of the Kensington scheme, were its freedom from the objectionable grandmotherly guardianship of the County Council, and the guaranteed cost of the fabric and its reconstruction, without making an appeal for public help. This scheme quickly fell through, and then came a proposal for rebuilding it in the North Churchyard of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, since the City was considered to be the natural home for Crosby Hall. A Committee, consisting of the Bishop of Kensington, Churchwarden Walter Bull, C.C., C. J. Thomas, C.C., Richard Evans, R. Harvey Barton, and Algernon M. Reveley, was appointed to consider the question, and at a subsequent meeting the following resolution was submitted by Mr. Evans:—

That this Committee, appointed at the meeting of the Vestry, held on the 23rd April, 1908, to consider a proposal then discussed for the re-erection of the ancient fabric of Crosby Hall, upon the land adjoining the Church of St. Botolph, in the Parish of Bishopsgate, are of opinion that the proposal is worthy of adoption, provided that the tenure of the land can be acquired for the purpose, and that the

amount requisite to defray the cost of re-erection and maintenance be assured to the satisfaction of the Committee. And having regard to the necessity, which the Committee understands exists, for the matter being brought to a settlement at an early date, in view of the continuing expense involved by the storage of the fabric, the Committee recommend as follows:—

- (a) That the site selected for the re-erection of the Hall, should be that at present occupied by the School House, with such addition of adjoining land as may suffice for the purpose, provided that this site can be acquired under a Faculty, and thus the delay which would be entailed in obtaining an Act of Parliament would be avoided.
- (b) That in order to secure the earliest financial arrangement, a communication embodying the views of the Committee, be transmitted forthwith to the Committee originally appointed to preserve the building, known as the Crosby Hall Preservation Committee.
- (c) That these views and recommendations of the Committee, be transmitted to the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, with a request that his Lordship do continue the communication which he has opened with the Directors of the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, for the purpose of securing the fabric of the famous building, and that his Lordship may be urged to render his aid and influence to realise the earnest desire of the citizens, the members of learned societies and the great numbers of individuals representing all classes of the community, that the building should be preserved in the City of London as an historical monument of the highest interest, and that it should be permanently devoted to purposes of public advantage.

It was held that even if the Rector (the Bishop of Kensington) would surrender the land for the purpose, the ground would need to be de-consecrated, or that an Act of Parliament would be necessary, and as no actual plans and other details were before the meeting, the Committee agreed that for the time, nothing could be done beyond expressing itself favourable to any scheme which would secure for Bishopsgate the recovery of its lost treasure. At this point, the ever watchful Metropolitan Public Gardens' Association, without taking the trouble to thoroughly understand the circumstances of the case and apparently unable to discriminate between an encroachment upon an open space for commercial purposes, and the re-erection of an ancient historic building on a site already occupied by a secular institution—an infant school—

threatened to interfere, in a manner quite uncalled for, and altogether unnecessary.

It is earnestly hoped that one or other of the proposals will quickly materialise, and that the Hall may be re-erected without changing its actual proportions, or taking away from it anything of its original magnificence, so that we may be able to visit, and gaze upon a monumental relic, giving evidence of the taste, the skill, and the generosity of our forefathers, speaking of bygone times, and of those events I have already touched upon.

Thus rapidly has been traced, if imperfectly, the eventful history of what was, until recently, the most remarkable and interesting of our London antiquities, the last authentic example of Gothic domestic architecture belonging to that period, when our princely merchants began to take rank with those of the Court, and it is a national disgrace that this noble edifice, which seemed to have defied the touch of Time himself, and to have mellowed into a more solemn beauty as each year went by, so endeared by many interesting events in the history of the country, and so admirable for its intrinsic beauty, should have passed at last into the hands of the vandal of the pickaxe. The "improvements" in the City during the last century, have involved the sacrifice of so many places possessing either architectural interest or historic associations, that it is devoutly hoped our failure to conserve this magnificent relic left to us by a yet more magnificent past, so far from routing us, may serve only to strengthen that jealous spirit of preservation, which shall make such a loss, as that of Crosby Hall, absolutely impossible for the future.

FINIS.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF
FREEHOLDERS, LEASEHOLDERS, AND OCCUPIERS
OF CROSBY PLACE

1466—1907

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF FREEHOLDERS

CROSBY

DATE	OCCUPIERS	LEASEHOLDERS	FREEHOLDERS
1466-1475	Sir John Crosby	Sir John Crosby	Prioress of St. Helen's
1475-1483	Lady Crosby (?)	Executors of Sir John Crosby	ditto
1483	Duke of Gloucester	ditto	ditto
1483-1501	(Not known)	ditto	ditto
1501-1505	Sir Bartholomew Reed	Sir Bartholomew Reed	ditto
1505-1507	Lady Reed	Lady Reed	ditto
1508-1519	Sir John Rest (probably)	Sir John Rest	ditto
1519-1523	Sir Thomas More	ditto	ditto
1523-1524	ditto	Sir Thomas More	ditto
1524-1538	Antonio Bonvisi	Antonio Bonvisi	ditto
1538	ditto	ditto	ditto
1538-1542	ditto	ditto	The Crown
1542-1547	ditto		Antonio Bonvisi
1547	ditto	Roper and Rastell	ditto
1547	ditto	ditto	Richard Heywood and John Webb
1547-1550	ditto	Germain Cioll and Benedict Bonvisi	ditto

LEASEHOLDERS AND OCCUPIERS OF CROSBY PLACE

PLACE

REMARKS

Lease granted for 99 years at £11 6s. 8d. per annum.

Leased or lent to Richard, Duke of Gloucester (May, 1483).

Richard III. left Crosby Place in November, 1483, for Westminster.

Leased to Sir Bartholomew Reed on the 16th January, 1501, by Johann Easefloy, representative of the executors under Sir John Crosby's will.

Sir Bartholomew died in 1505; the lease was bequeathed to Lady Reed.

Surrendered to William Fermer and his wife, representatives of the executors under Sir John Crosby's will (9th May, 1507).

Sir John Rest probably purchased the lease in 1508, and spent his Mayoralty here in 1516-17.

Probably let to Sir Thomas More in 1519, and on the 1st June, 1523, he purchased the lease for £150 from the executors of Sir John Rest.

More sold the lease on the 20th January, 1524, for £200, to Antonio Bonvisi.

Lease for 71 years and confirmation of the unexpired term of 28 years granted to Bonvisi (28th March, 1538).

Seized by Henry VIII. at the dissolution of the monasteries on the 25th November, 1538.

Purchased from the King's Treasurer (Sir Edward Northe) for £207 18s. 4d. (9th Sep., 1542).

Leased to William Roper and William Rastell for 90 years (1st April, 1547).

License granted Bonvisi to sell the freehold, 22nd June, 1547. Deed of Feoffment to Heywood and Webb, 4th July, 1547.

Leased by Roper and Rastell to Germain Cioll and Benedict Bonvisi for 89 years (2nd Aug., 1547)

Bonvisi, Roper, Rastell, Cioll and Heywood leave England, time of persecutions (1548-50).

DATE	OCCUPIERS	LEASEHOLDERS	FREEHOLDERS
1550-1553	(Unoccupied)		Escheated to the Crown
1553-1554	Lord Darcy		Lord Darcy
1554	Antonio Bonvisi	Germain Cioll and Benedict Bonvisi	Richard Heywood and John Webb
1554-1560	Peter Crowle		Peter Crowle
1560-1561	ditto	Germain Cioll	ditto
1561	ditto	John Cioll and John Frier	ditto
1561	ditto	ditto	James and Thomas Altham
1561-1566	Germain Cioll		Germain Cioll
1566-1576	Alderman William Bond		Alderman William Bond
1576-1594	William Bond and his mother		William Bond
1594-1609	Sir John Spencer		Sir John Spencer
1609-1615	Dowager Countess of Pembroke		William, 1st Earl of Northampton
1615-1621	William Russell and East India Company	William Russell	William and Spencer Earls of Northampton
1621-1636	William Russell and East India Company	ditto	Spencer, 2nd Earl of Northampton
1636-1638	East India Company		ditto
1638-1642	Spencer, 2nd Earl of Northampton		ditto
1642-1671	Sir John Langham	Sir John Langham	James, Earl of North- ampton

PLACE

REMARKS

Granted to Lord Darcy (18th June, 1553).

Restored to Bonvisi and the others interested, after the accession of Mary (11th May, 1554).

Inherited by Peter Crowle on the death of Bonvisi (22nd June, 1554).

Assigned by Crowle to Germain Cioll (28th February, 1560). Indenture between Cioll and Crowle (1st March, 1560).

Assigned by Germain Cioll to his brother, John Cioll, and John Frier (25th January, 1561).

Freehold assigned to James and Thomas Altham (28th January, 1561).

Surrendered by James and Thomas Altham in favour of Germain Cioll and Cicely, his wife (30th June, 1561).

Purchased from Germain Cioll by Alderman William Bond for £1,600 (15th May, 1566).

Inherited by William Bond, son of the Alderman.

Purchased by Sir John Spencer for £2,560.

Inherited by Sir William Compton, afterwards 1st Earl of Northampton, in right of his wife, daughter and heiress of Sir John Spencer.

The Earl does not appear to have resided here. A 21 years' lease is granted to William Russell in 1615.

It would appear that a portion of the mansion was used as a residence by William Russell, while another portion was used as a warehouse and workshop by the East India Company.

Expiration of lease to William Russell in 1636.

In May, 1633, the Earl gave notice that he wished possession of Crosby Place so soon as the Company's lease expired, but the Company did not leave until 1638.

Lease for 99 years granted to Sir John Langham.

The greater part of the Palace was burnt down in 1672.

DATE	OCCUPIERS	LEASEHOLDERS	FREEHOLDERS
1671-1676	Sir Stephen Langham	Sir Stephen Langham and William Freeman	James, 3rd Earl of Northampton
1672-1692	Presbyterian Meeting House, etc.	Sir Stephen Langham, William Freeman, and Thomas Goodinge (William Freeman	Edward Cranfield
1692-1769			William Freeman
1769-1778	James Rely, as a Meeting House for Relyanists		Sambrooke Freeman
1778-1831	Messrs. Holmes & Hall	Messrs. Holmes & Hall	The Freeman Family
1831-1833	Various	Preservation Committee	ditto
1833-1835	Various	ditto	ditto
1835-1839	Various	Miss Hackett	ditto
1839-1842	Various	Company of Proprietors	ditto
1842-1848	Crosby Hall Literary and Scientific Institution	Rev. Charles Mackenzie	ditto
1848-1856	Metropolitan Evening Classes for young men	ditto	ditto
1856-1860	ditto		ditto
1860-1862	Lectures, Concerts, Mid- day prayer meetings		ditto
1862-1867	Messrs. H. R. Williams & Co.	Messrs. H. R. Williams & Co.	ditto
1868-1873	Messrs. F. Gordon & Co.	Messrs. F. Gordon & Co.	ditto
1873-1907	Messrs. F. Gordon & Co.		Messrs. F. Gordon & Co.
1907	(Empty)		Chartered Bank of Ind

HALL

REMARKS

William Freeman obtained an under-lease, *circa* 1676.

The upper portion of the Hall was used by the Presbyterians, the lower portion by Granado Chester, wholesale grocer, while the Council Chamber was tenanted by the East India Company.

In 1692 William Freeman acquired Sir Stephen Langham's leasehold interest of 47 years, and also purchased the freehold from Cranfield.

In 1756 Joseph South and others obtained a lease of the Throne Room for 17 years.

Used as a packer's warehouse. At the expiration of lease it passed to the Preservation Committee.

Lease granted to the Committee for 99 years (September, 1833). Work of restoration continued.

In 1835 the funds of the Committee became exhausted, and Miss Hackett took over the lease.

Purchase of Miss Hackett's interest in the lease by a company of proprietors (? 1839).

Re-opened by Alderman Copeland, 27th July, 1842. Leased to the Rev. Charles Mackenzie.

Appropriated by the Rev. Charles Mackenzie for the Metropolitan Evening Classes.

A debt was incurred, and the freeholder purchased the leasehold from the Rev. C. Mackenzie.

The Classes removed to Sussex Hall in 1860. The property was offered for sale in 1857 but not sold.

Let for various purposes.

Used as a storehouse for wine.

Premises offered for sale in 1871 but bought in at £22,500, subsequently sold for £30,000, and in 1873 the freehold was purchased by Gordon & Co. for about £37,000.

Purchased by the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China for £175,000. The so-called Throne Room and Council Chamber, with the timbered façade, razed to the ground.

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This work is in MS., and is preserved in the Library of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Extremely valuable for the history of Crosby Place in the beginning of the 19th century.
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Description of the architectural details of the Hall and its appurtenances. There are 5 illustrations. The woodcut view of the exterior was pronounced a very accurate one at the time the book was reviewed in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. It contains a copy of the will of Sir John Crosby and that of Cicely Cioll.
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London : John Snow. [1848.]

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- 1850 A descriptive memoir of the Museum of Mediæval Architecture and Sculpture formed by . . . Lewis N. Cottingham, Esq., F.S.A. 1850.

Contains a drawing of the Council Chamber ceiling.

- 1856 A memoir of Crosby Place. By the Rev. Thomas Hugo, M.A., F.S.A., &c. (Read in Crosby Hall, January 28th, 1856). pp. 23, dy. 8vo.
London : J. B. Nichols & Sons. [1856.]

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- 1861 Prayer answered in the history of Crosby Hall prayer meeting. 1861.

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[London : Gordon & Co. 1879.]

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History and antiquities of dissenting churches. By Walter Wilson. pp. 329-361.

London: The Author. 1808.

The chapter entitled Crosby Square gives biographical notices of the ministers who occupied the pulpit at Crosby Hall, when used as a meeting house.

Londina Illustrata. [By Robert Wilkinson]. 2 v. 1819-1825.

Vol. I. Contains 3 pages of letterpress and 9 illustrations, 5 of which are reproduced in the present work.

Specimens of Gothic architecture. By Augustus Pugin. 1825.

Contains admirable measured drawings.

History and antiquities of London, Westminster and Southwark. By Thomas Allen. 5 v. London: George Virtue. 1830-37.

Vol. 3, pp. 153-157 and vol. 5, pp. 216-227, contain references to Crosby Place.

Vol. 3 has a plate shewing Crosby Hall *cir.* 1826, a ground plan of the Hall, the entrance to the vaults and other details.

Saturday Magazine, No. 12, September 8th, 1832. pp. 89-90.

Apart from the letterpress, the journal contains two views—the interior shewing the screened passage-way under the Minstrels' Gallery and the exterior of the Hall *circa* 1830.

The Penny Magazine, Monthly Supplement, No. 48, 30th November to 31st December, 1832.

Contains 3 columns of printed matter and an engraving, shewing the second floor inserted below the corbels supporting the roof, when used as a warehouse.

The Graphic Illustrator. 1832.

Contains six pages of printed matter and four illustrations.

Nonconformist recollections of Crosby Hall.

Contained in *Congregational Magazine*, vol. 16, p. 451.

The Mirror. 5th January, 1833.

Contains two pages of quotations from the book on Crosby Hall, by E. I. Carlos. The Mirror, vol. 9, page 329, contains an engraving of the Hall.

Gentleman's Magazine.

1831, part II., pp. 498-9; 1832, part I, pp. 424 and 505-8.

1832, part II., pp. 435-8; 1833, part I, pp. 54-5; 1836, vol. 6, N.S., pp. 240-5.

The Literary World. 15th June, 1839.

Report of a lecture delivered in Crosby Hall on 26th May, by John Britton, F.S.A., on the architecture of our ancient Halls, in which he made some references to Crosby Hall. The lecture was illustrated by drawings of several English mansions of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries.

London; edited by Charles Knight, vol. I., pp. 317-332.

The article, which is written by J. Saunders, contains three illustrations.

Lives of illustrious Lord Mayors and Aldermen of London. By W. R. Woodcock.

London: Alex. Dangerfield. [1846.]

Most useful for biographical notices of Sir John Crosby, Lord Mayors Read, Rest and Spencer.

London as it is to-day.

Contains a view of the Hall after the second floor had been introduced.

London and its vicinity. (Weales). 1851.

Three pages of letterpress and an exterior view of the beautiful Oriel. The same information is given in "Pictorial handbook of London" (Bohn's), 1854.

The Builder. November 8th, 1851.

Contains a print of the drawing of the ceiling formerly in the Council Chamber of Crosby Hall, which was purchased for Mr. Cottingham's Elizabethan Museum, and sold by auction to Mr. Waleaby in November, 1857.

Lectures delivered at Crosby Hall at the meetings of the Evening Classes for Young Men. By the Rev. T. H. Bullock, M.A.. pp. IV.-102.

London: Edward West. 1860.

The compiler has not seen this volume, but is indebted to Mr. Aleck Abrahams for the information.

London scenes and London people. By "Aleph" [Dr. W. Harvey]. p. 312 *et seq.*

London: "City Press" Office. 1863.

Dr. Harvey visited Crosby Hall on 8th January, 1863, escorted round by Mr. H. R. Williams.

Some account of the Worshipful Company of Grocers of the City of London. By Baron Heath.

London: Privately printed. 1869.

Biographical notice of Sir John Crosby.

Ancient meeting houses. By Godfrey H. Pike.

London: Passmore & Alabaster. 1870.

For information relating to Crosby Hall as a Presbyterian meeting house.

London: its celebrated characters. By J. Heneage Jesse. 3 v.

London: Richard Bentley. 1871.

Vol. 2, pp. 339-404, gives an excellent resumé of the history of the Palace.

Every Saturday. Vol. 13, 1872, page 438.

Old and New London (Cassell's). 1875.

Vol. 2, pp. 155-8, contains views of the Bishopsgate Street front of Crosby Hall, and of the Banqueting Hall in 1790.

The Annals of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate; edited by Rev. John E. Cox, D.D.

*London: Tinsley Brothers. 1876.

Contains much useful information respecting Crosby Place, and a view of Sir John and Lady Crosby's tomb.

Curiosities of London (Timbs). 1885. pp. 297-9.

Views of the exterior and interior of the Banqueting Hall in 1841.

London, past and present. By H. B. Wheatley. 3 v.

London : John Murray. 1891.

Vol. 1, pp. 476-9, contains excellent notes on Crosby Place.

London. By Sir Walter Besant.

London : Chatto & Windus. 1892.

There are six illustrations—one of them shewing the Banqueting Hall in the Plantagenet days.

Shakespeare's London. By T. F. Ordish. pp. 62-3.

London : J. M. Dent. 1897.

Contains a view of the Hall from the passage leading to Crosby Square.

Old London Taverns. By E. Callow. pp. 66-74.

London : Downey & Co. 1899.

View of the Hall in 1820.

Ancient Royal palaces in and near London. 1902.

Contains one view, by T. R. Way.

Mediæval London. By Sir Walter Besant. vol. I., pp. 152-3.

London : A. & C. Black. 1906.

Contains a portrait of Richard III. and views of the N.E. of Crosby Hall and the interior of the Council room.

The pageant of London. By Richard Davey. 2 v.

London : Methuen & Co. [1906.]

Is most useful for life in London during the fifteenth century.

The following works may also be found useful :—

Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain.

State Papers.

Maitland's History of London, vol. 2, 1756, pp. 800-1.

Hughson's History of London, vol., 2, 1805, pp. 417-19.

Nightingale's London and Middlesex, 1815, pp. 168-70.

Thomas' Wards of the City of London, pp. 139-41, with view of Crosby House, *cir.* 1830.

Miller's Picturesque Sketches of London, 1852, pp. 149-50.

Wood's Ecclesiastical Antiquities, 1874, pp. 45-6.

Loftie's London, 1884, pp. 290-1.

Hutton's Literary Landmarks, 1888, pp. 268-9.

Ross' Bygone London, 1892, pp. 98-101.

Sharpe's London and the Kingdom, 1895, vol. i., pp. 320, 512; vol. ii., p. 173.

Burgon's Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham, vol. i., pp. 419-21.

vol ii., pp. 454-5.

Norman's London Vanished and Vanishing, pp. 59-63.

PROSPECTUSES, PARTICULARS OF SALES, CIRCULARS, &c.

Illustrations of Crosby Hall [1838].

A quarto engraved circular announcing that Premiums to the amount of £100 will be awarded in 1839 for the best historical and graphical illustrations of Crosby Hall, etc. (preserved in the London Institution).

Crosby Hall [1838].

A quarto printed circular inviting persons to compete for the prizes offered for the best architectural drawings and sketches of Crosby Hall, and for the best biographical accounts of the various occupiers of the ancient palace (preserved in the London Institution).

Illustrations of Crosby Hall [1838].

A two-page 8vo circular announcing a prize competition for the best antiquarian illustrations of Crosby Hall, and the best memoirs of the various occupiers.

Prospectus of the Crosby Hall Literary and Scientific Institution. 1842.

A copy of this prospectus is in the possession of Mr. Aleck Abrahams, and it is signed by Sir Henry Ellis.

Invitation to a Soirée held 27th July [1842].

The soirée was given by the Literary and Scientific Institution on the occasion of the re-opening of the Hall, after restoration, by Alderman W. T. Copeland, M.P.

Invitation to a Conversazione, 31st May [1842].

The invitation card is that sent to Mr. and Mrs. Carlos, and inscribed "Repair to Crosby Place," Richard III., Act. I., Scene 3. Friends were invited to form an exhibition of prints and drawings of Crosby Hall and its vicinity.

Bill and Programme of a Concert and Comedy arranged by Miss Clara Seyton to be given on three nights, February 13th, 16th and 17th, 1846.

The bill is printed on silk.

Prospectus of the evening classes for young men in London. [By the Rev. C. Mackenzie, Hon. Sec.]. 1853.

This contains an engraving of the Hall and Organ Gallery, and announces the Annual Festival to be held at the London Tavern, on the 4th May, 1853, to be presided over by the Right Hon. Lord Feversham.

Plan of Crosby Place, Bishopsgate.

This original plan of the vaults of Crosby Place is preserved at the Guildhall (collection of Bishopsgate Prints).

Plans of Crosby Hall, Bishopsgate Street.

Two original plans of Crosby Hall and adjoining property, preserved at Guildhall.

Plan and particulars of Crosby Hall to be offered for sale at the Auction Mart, by Mr. Thomas Fox, on Wednesday the 3rd June, 1857. Folio.

Although the property was announced for sale, the premises do not appear to have been sold, seeing that the freehold remained with the Freeman family until 1871, when it was again offered for sale.

Circular issued by H. R. Williams.

The circular is signed H. R. Williams, and dated 23rd April, 1864. As some misapprehension then existed with reference to the appropriation of Crosby Hall to mercantile purposes, Mr. Williams quotes the following passage from Dr. Harvey's book on London. "We are happy to say that no portion of the building has been destroyed or disfigured for mere trade purposes. If it could not be kept sacred for antiquarian or literary uses, perhaps appropriating it as a store for the wealth of many a choice vintage is the least objectionable species of desecration." To the circular is appended a fine woodcut view of the interior of the Hall as used for the storage of wines.

Plans and particulars of the Crosby Hall Estate, for sale by auction at the Mart, on the 1st June, 1871, by Messrs. Beadel. Folio. London, 1871.

Contains a coloured block plan of the estate, and detailed plans of each of the 14 lots; together with a lithograph view of the Banqueting Hall, shewing figures of six persons in the costume of the 15th century, also a drawing of the fireplace in the Hall. This handsome volume is preserved at Guildhall Library. The property was bought in at £22,500.

APPEALS ISSUED TO THE PUBLIC.

Preservation of Crosby Hall. pp. 8, cr. 8vo. [1832].

First appeal for subscriptions towards the preservation of Crosby Hall, issued in May, 1832. Contains the Resolution passed at the meeting held on the 8th May, and also list of subscriptions received up to date of circular, amounting to £441.

Preservation of Crosby Hall. pp. 4, 4to. 1832.

An appeal issued to the various City Companies for contributions towards the preservation of the Hall. The circular, which is signed by S. J. Capper, and dated the 15th August, 1832, contains the names of 143 subscribers and the amount received up to this date was £662.

Third appeal for its preservation, issued on the 1st December, 1832.

This appeal is signed by Alderman Copeland, Chairman of the Preservation Committee, and contains a list of the names of 156 subscribers, signed S. J. Capper, Hon. Sec. The amount subscribed at date of circular was £681 lds. 0d. In the Guildhall Library.

Fourth appeal on 5th June, 1833.

This appeal was made for funds for the completion of repairs, towards which Ald. Copeland gave £100.

Restoration of Crosby Hall, 1836.

This fifth appeal which is dated 27th June, 1836, and signed by S. J. Capper, Hon. Sec., is for further subscriptions to meet an additional outlay of £500 to complete the restoration of the Great Hall. Gives an historical summary, and a list of subscribers. The amount subscribed up to the date of this quarto circular was about £900. (In the London Institution.)

Crosby Hall, 1470-1907. pp. 16, illus., 4to.

London : Crowther & Goodman. [1907.]

Issued by the Preservation Committee as an Appeal to the Nation, November, 1907. At the date of the appeal £48,000 had been subscribed towards the preservation.

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